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2-24-09

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 19, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: RECEIPT OF THE REPORT OF THE AD HOC MOTORCOACH TASK FORCE, SCHEDULING CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON MARCH 14, AND REFERRAL OF CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD

ISSUE: Motorcoach management.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council receive this report, schedule recommendations 1 through 7 below for public hearing on Saturday, March 14, and refer recommendations 8 through 10 to the Traffic and Parking Board for consideration and public hearing (report pages which explain each recommendation are listed below):

1. Approve the concept of voluntary on-line motorcoach registration, and request staff to create, for future Council consideration, such a registration system including fees and daily limitations on certain types of motorcoach trips for implementation by March 2010 (page 45);
2. Create the on-line registration system, and allocate \$25,000 from Council's FY 2009 Contingent Reserve (page 46);
3. Request that the City Manager instruct Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) staff to conduct counts of motorcoach operations in 2009 (page 47);
4. Request that the City Manager reconvene the Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force as currently constituted to review long-term motorcoach management strategies (page 48);
5. Request that the City Manager instruct T&ES to provide quarterly motorcoach updates to the Task Force and to Council, including progress reports on motorcoach counts, development of walking tours and a registration system (page 48);

6. Request that the City Manager instruct the Police Department to enforce existing City ordinances more aggressively with respect to motorcoach traffic and parking, and request that the Police Department collect and report data on motorcoach enforcement activity (page 49);
7. Request that the City Manager instruct the Police Department to continue its transportation management efforts on the unit block of King Street (page 50);
8. Permanently designate the unit block of King Street one-way westbound to allow for safer traffic flow and provide better transportation management (page 51);
9. Designate the south side of Jamieson Avenue between Holland Lane and South West Street as short-term (2-hour) motorcoach parking between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Spaces on Jamieson Avenue will provide new short-term motorcoach parking in addition to existing short-term parking on North Union Street at Robinson Terminal and on the 900 block of North St. Asaph Street (page 52); and
10. Designate new 30-minute motorcoach parking spaces in the following locations (page 53):
 - a. Two spaces at 112-118 North Washington Street, and
 - b. Two spaces at 110-112 South Washington Street.

Note: The above recommendations reflect the Task Force recommendations, but have been slightly reworded so they are actionable by Council.

BACKGROUND: Tourism is vital to Alexandria's local economy, and motorcoaches and tour buses perform functions that benefit the City in many respects. However, motorcoach operations at times conflict with residential neighborhoods and the City's important historic fabric. This report outlines the recommendations of the City's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force, which was established by the City Manager in April 2008 to develop a proactive approach to motorcoach management and present its findings to City Council. The report centers around ten recommendations that are actionable by Council and can be implemented in the short term. The report also includes an outline for a long-term process that will allow the City to legally and proactively manage motorcoach transportation in the future. The Task Force wishes to emphasize that it is essential for the short-term recommendations contained within this report to be coupled with institutional strategies that will provide the City with the capacity and regulatory authority necessary to permanently manage motorcoaches in Alexandria.

DISCUSSION: To help the City address issues related to motorcoach transportation, the City Manager appointed an Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force in April 2008 comprised of five residents, five business/industry representatives, one representative from the Historic Alexandria Resources Commission and five staff/City Council members, including staff from Transportation & Environmental Services and Police.

Working collaboratively, the Task Force's goal was to develop a proactive approach to motorcoach management that recognizes the economic value of the industry and balances its operational needs with measures to limit intrusive effects on Alexandria's neighborhoods, the environment, quality of life, traffic and parking. The Task Force reviewed best practices and sought to build consensus on measures that balance the multiple interests of the City.

The Motorcoach Task Force incorporated community input into its regular meetings throughout the process. Members of the Motorcoach Task Force made periodic updates to community groups, including meetings of the Old Town Civic Association and the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce. A community-wide meeting was held at Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy on January 26, 2009.

At the beginning of its efforts, the Motorcoach Task Force established a web page (www.alexandriava.gov/motorcoach) and established an eNews group that provided regular updates via eNews to citizens interested in the group's progress. Task Force meeting notes, minutes, presentations and reports were posted by staff to the City website after each meeting. Many comments were received from residents at the meetings, which contributed to formulating the recommendations.

Motorcoach Task Force Recommendations: The Motorcoach Task Force believes it has achieved a consensus on a balanced framework of short-term motorcoach management strategies with a blend of operational measures, enforcement and education. The short-term recommendations contained within the attached report reflect the recommendations in the attached *Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force Short-Term Recommendations Report*.

Additionally, the Task Force wishes to emphasize that City Council should set a firm goal of 2011 to acquire the regulatory authority from the Commonwealth of Virginia to either change the Code of Virginia (§46.2-1304) so that Alexandria may locally restrict the operation of nonscheduled buses over designated streets in its jurisdiction, or to seek a Charter Amendment to enact more specific local regulation. The methodological approach to acquire the legal authority to regulate motorcoaches in the long-term is outlined in Appendix A of the attached report. Additional community outreach before the Traffic and Parking Board public hearing is being planned.

In the interim, the Task Force believes that an incremental approach to motorcoach management is a practical and cost-effective solution to issues related to motorcoach traffic without having to resort to radical changes that may inadvertently harm tourism.

FISCAL IMPACT: The immediate fiscal impact of this program will be \$25,000 to conduct traffic counts of motorcoaches during representative weeks in 2009. This cost can be funded through the Dept. of Transportation & Environmental Services existing FY 2009 professional services budget. The work program includes a category for transportation studies that was intended to be a catch-all for this type of study.

Implementing recommendation #2 would require funding of approximately \$25,000 from Council's contingent reserves for development of an on-line registration system. If Council

decides to fund recommendation #2 from contingent reserves, \$25,000 could be reallocated from part of the contingent account originally set aside for AEDP. These funds will not be needed for the originally designated purpose in FY 2009, but by using these funds, the year-end surplus carryover to help fund the overall FY 2010 City budget would be reduced by \$25,000.

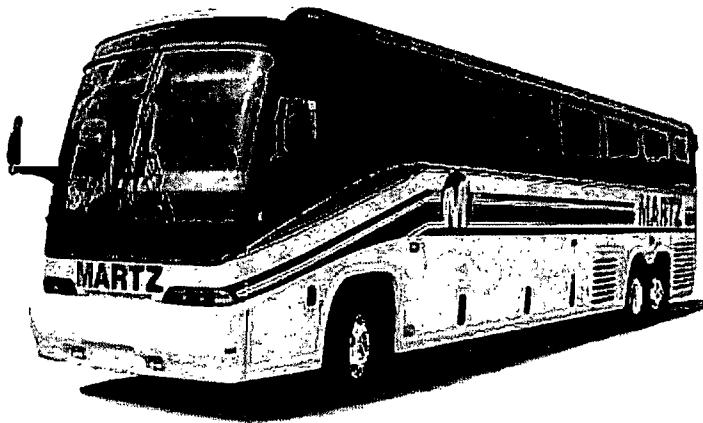
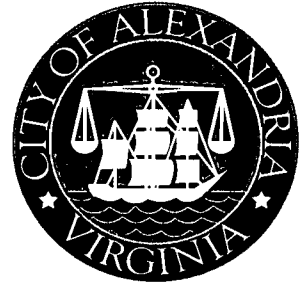
Recommendation #7 will require approximately \$80,000 annually to cover Alexandria Police Department overtime. In FY 2009, the City added \$80,000 to the Police Department's overtime budget for the National Harbor initiative, which supports transportation management in the Lower King Street area. To continue this effort in FY 2010 and beyond, the Police Department would need to have those funds budgeted annually. These funds are included in the FY 2010 proposed budget.

ATTACHMENT: *Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force Short-Term Recommendations Report; Motorcoach Task Force Agendas, Meeting Minutes and Presentations*

STAFF:

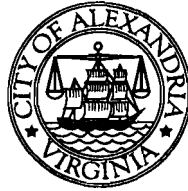
Richard J. Baier, P.E., Director, Department of Transportation & Environmental Services
David Baker, Chief, Alexandria Police Department
Yon Lambert, Pedestrian/Bicycle Coordinator, Transportation & Environmental Services

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force Short-Term Recommendations



February 24, 2009

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force



Richard J. Baier, Chair
Dept. of Transportation & Environmental Services

Rob Aronson
Resident, Alexandria Old & Historic District
Residents Group

David Baker, Chief of Police
Alexandria Police Department

Stephanie Brown
Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association

Bert Ely
Resident, Old Town Civic Association

William D. Euille, Mayor
City of Alexandria

Nick Gregory
Kimpton Hotels/Alexandria Chamber of
Commerce

Charlotte Hall
Potomac Riverboat Company

Hubert Herre
Crown Plaza Old Town/Alexandria Hotel
Association

Poul Hertel
Resident, Old Town Civic Association

Valerie Ianieri
Resident, Founders Park Community
Association

Greg Ogden
Resident, North Old Town Independent
Citizens

Paul C. Smedberg, Councilman
City of Alexandria

Ellen Stanton
Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

Tara G. Zimnick-Calico
Old Town Business & Professional Association

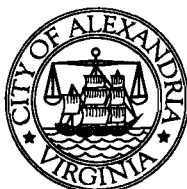
The Task Force also wishes to acknowledge the efforts of Old Town Civic Association resident Sarita Schotta and Chamber of Commerce representative Denielle Vendetti who each served on the Task Force in limited capacity.

Staff

James Bartlett, Dianne Gittins, Jesse Harman, David Huchler, Cleveland Spruill – Alexandria Police
Andrea Blackford, Tony Castrilli, Julie Kanzler, Yon Lambert, Christopher Spera, Ryan Touhill – City
of Alexandria

Lorraine Lloyd – Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force



Recommendations

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COVER LETTER

DATE: 24 FEBRUARY 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RICHARD J. BAIER, CHAIR

SUBJECT: AD HOC MOTORCOACH TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

We are pleased to submit for your consideration the attached documents from the City Manager's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force.

We have carefully addressed, and we believe accomplished, the mission established for this Task Force as set forth in the invitation of James K. Hartmann, City Manager of April 22, 2008. The Task Force wishes to emphasize that it is essential for the short-term recommendations contained within this report to be coupled with institutional strategies that will provide the City with the capacity and regulatory authority necessary to permanently manage motorcoaches in Alexandria. A record of our meetings, processes and procedures is included.

The goal of this Task Force has been to work collaboratively with multiple stakeholders to develop a proactive approach to motorcoach management that recognizes the economic value of the industry and balances its operational needs with measures to limit intrusive effects on Alexandria's neighborhoods, historic resources, the environment, quality of life, traffic and parking. The Task Force has reviewed best practices and built consent on measures that balance the various interests of the City with regards to the public health, safety and welfare of the community.

Tourism is vital to our local economy, and tour buses perform a function that benefits the local economy. However, motorcoach operations at times conflict with our residential neighborhoods and the City's important historic fabric. Ultimately, these recommendations should help the City begin to address key concerns related to motorcoaches that led the City Manager to establish this task force.

While we have considered a broad range of possible approaches and solutions, we have concluded that the City can make measurable improvements with a targeted and incremental approach to motorcoach management. We specifically address and recommend short-term changes related to parking/drop-off, enforcement and operations. Unresolved issues that will require long-term solutions include designated routes, permitting and vehicle size. We recommend that City Council adopt this short-term framework so City staff may begin preparing for the spring 2009 peak season.

The membership of our task force was intentionally selected to represent the divergent interests that will be impacted by these proposals and so our decisions and recommendations are not unanimous. However, the Task Force generally consents to the overall framework which reflects the valuable input it received from the public, industry representatives and Council.

We appreciate the support and advice we received from the staff of the City Attorney, Alexandria Police Department, Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association, Dept. of Transportation & Environmental Services, Office of the City Manager and Legislative Director.

I. BACKGROUND

Tourism is vital to Alexandria's local economy, growth and development. As a result, motorcoaches and tour buses perform functions that benefit the City and residents. However, motorcoach operations often conflict with residential neighborhoods and the City's important historic fabric. Over the years, residents have grown increasingly concerned about motorcoach transportation and, in particular, the size, weight, numbers, noise, safety, inability to navigate and time of operation of motorcoaches.

This report outlines the short-term recommendations of the City's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force which was established by the City Manager in April 2008 to develop a proactive approach to motorcoach management and present its findings to City Council.

In this report, the term "motorcoach" means any nonscheduled bus and thus does not apply to Alexandria-based school buses or public transit vehicles. The Task Force defined a motorcoach or tour bus to mean large motor vehicles that convey passengers – most typically over longer distances between cities where passengers pre-book tickets for specific trips. A motorcoach often seats as many as 56 passengers and provides luggage holds separate from passenger cabins, as well as equipment to accommodate persons with mobility impairments.

The issue of motorcoaches has grown in importance over the last few years as the City has sought new revenue sources, especially from increased tourism. In the cover page summary of its 2007 report "Motorcoaches and Tourism Policy in Alexandria, Virginia" the Alexandria Old & Historic Residents Group state: "A relatively recent and rapidly growing component of this tourism in Old Town is motorcoach traffic. The unregulated growth of this traffic has had many deleterious effects on the Old Town area. Alexandria, like other significant historic residential areas, must regulate this motorcoach traffic. The regulation should be done in conjunction with the development of a tourism policy that is protective of residential interests, is conducive to business interests, and results in a high quality of experience for tourists."

The residents and City of Alexandria have previously explored various issues involving motorcoach and tour bus operations. In February 2004, the City Council charged the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA) with the establishment of a Motorcoach Task Force. The goal of the ACVA Task Force was to develop suggestions to enhance the economic benefit of motorcoach tours, while minimizing negative impacts on business and residential communities. The ACVA Task Force presented a plan to the City Manager on May 26, 2005, which recommended a work session with City Council and final report in November 2005.

The ACVA Task Force reached agreement on many issues including the inadequacy of existing short-term and overnight parking, insufficient signage, and the need for enforcement with respect to idling. Additionally, the group made important progress by establishing new overnight parking at the Masonic Temple, revising existing brochures and maps, and opening new lines of communication with motorcoach and tour bus companies. However, the ACVA Task Force did not reach agreement on the issue of designated routes, registration, or proposed limits on certain types of motorcoach trips.

By early 2008 – as part of the Chamber of Commerce National Harbor Collaborative Work Group – it became clear that additional management strategies were needed to address continual motorcoach issues related to expected growth due to tourism.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

To help the City address issues related to motorcoach transportation, the City Manager appointed an Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force in April 2008. This group was comprised of five residents, five business/industry representatives, one representative from Historic Alexandria and five staff/City Council members, including representatives from Transportation & Environmental Services and Police.

As a collaborative effort the Task Force’s goal was to develop a proactive approach to motorcoach management, which recognizes the economic value of the industry and balances the operational needs with measures to limit intrusive effects on Alexandria’s neighborhoods, the environment, quality of life, traffic and parking. The Task Force reviewed best practices and sought to build consensus on measures that balance the multiple interests of the City.

The 15-member Task Force met on the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month beginning in May 2008 to address citizen and industry concerns, review best practices, and discuss options to build a consensus among the group. The Task Force quickly agreed in principle on a Charter and moved into a study and analysis phase. As a result – given the City’s deadline for preparation of a legislative package – the Task Force considered whether it should immediately seek regulatory authority from the state to manage motorcoach operations. However, after discussions with the City Attorney’s office and Legislative Director the group decided against this option due to the many unanswered questions about the City’s existing efforts.

At its initial meetings, the Task Force determined its approach should use the following general structure:

- Compare motorcoach operations in Alexandria with other cities to review opportunities and constraints
- Seek input from residents, industry representatives and local business to ensure a balanced set of interests are addressed
- Develop primary issues and use a solutions-based approach to make short-term and long-term recommendations for motorcoach management

This report is organized to reflect an approach that focuses on three central chapters:

- II. Motorcoach Operations in Alexandria and Other Cities
- III. Motorcoach Transportation – Residential Concerns and Industry Perspectives
- IV. Primary Issues & Recommendations

Chapter V includes the detailed recommendations that provide an overall framework for the City’s proposed short-term motorcoach management strategies.

Early in its study, the Task Force identified five primary “Key Issue” areas which included: (a) Designated routes; (b) Short- and Long-term Parking; (c) Enforcement; (d) Loading/Unloading and (d) Communication/Education. The Task Force outlined a framework for motorcoach management, which included a plan to establish an advisory committee, pursue voluntary registration/permitting, establish limits on certain types of motorcoach trips, and seek authority from the state to regulate

motorcoach traffic. The Task Force also focused to incorporate input and planning principles from other City initiatives such as Eco-City Alexandria, the Wayfinding Task Force, National Harbor Collaborative, and the newly approved Transportation Master Plan.

Community Outreach

The Motorcoach Task Force incorporated community input into its regular meetings throughout the overall process. At the beginning of each Task Force meeting members were reminded they represented constituencies and were asked to incorporate regular input from the community during a period at the beginning of each meeting. Additionally, a period at the end of each meeting was also set aside for public comment and questions.

Members of the Motorcoach Task Force made periodic updates to community groups: including the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce Governmental Affairs Subcommittee, Old Town Civic Association (OTCA), and provided two updates to City Council, on September 23, 2008 and on November 25, 2008. Additionally, the OTCA held a meeting and panel discussion on motorcoaches for its members on October 8, 2008. Three of the five panelists served on the Task Force and provided updates regarding progress. The Task Force made a second presentation and update to the OTCA on January 14, 2008. A final community meeting was held on January 26, 2009 to incorporate comments from citizens.

At the beginning of its efforts, the Motorcoach Task Force established a web page (www.alexandriava.gov/motorcoach) and established an eNews group that provided regular updates about upcoming meetings. Task Force meeting notes, minutes, presentations and reports were posted by staff to the City website after each meeting. Numerous comments were received from residents at various meetings, which contributed to formulating the recommendations.

Motorcoach Task Force Recommendations

The Motorcoach Task Force believes it has a consensus on a balanced program of short-term recommendations which blend incremental operational improvements and enforcement. Additionally, the Task Force wishes to emphasize that City Council must set a firm goal of 2011 to acquire the regulatory authority from the Commonwealth of Virginia to either change the Code of Virginia (§46.2-1304) so that Alexandria may locally restrict the operation of nonscheduled buses over designated streets in its jurisdiction or to seek a Charter Amendment to enact more specific local regulation. The methodological approach to acquire the legal authority to regulate motorcoaches in the long-term is outlined in Appendix A of the attached report.

In the interim, the Task Force believes that an incremental approach to motorcoach management is a practical and cost-effective solution to issues related to motorcoach traffic, without having to resort to radical changes that may inadvertently harm tourism.

The short-term recommendations are as follows:

1. To encourage continuity and transparency, staff should provide quarterly updates to the Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force as currently constituted. The Task Force will reconvene in the future to review long-term motorcoach management strategies.
2. Instruct staff to conduct counts of motorcoach operations in Alexandria in 2009.
 - a. A longer-term goal will be to implement an on-line motorcoach registration or permitting system by March 2010 to include fees and daily limitations on certain types of motorcoach trips.
3. Permanently designate the unit block of King Street one-way westbound to allow for safer traffic flow and provide better motorcoach management.
4. Designate the south side of Jamieson Avenue between Holland Lane and South West Street as short-term (2 hour) motorcoach parking between the hours of 8 am and 8 pm. Spaces on Jamieson Avenue will provide new short-term motorcoach parking in addition to existing short-term parking on North Union Street at Robinson Terminal and on the 900 block of North St. Asaph Street.
5. Designate new 30-minute motorcoach parking spaces in the following locations:
 - o Two spaces at 112-118 North Washington Street
 - o Two spaces at 110-112 South Washington Street
6. Instruct the Alexandria Police Department to more aggressively enforce existing city ordinances with respect to motorcoach traffic and collect/report data related to motorcoach violations.
7. Continue funding the Alexandria Police Department in its transportation management efforts on the unit block of King Street.

II. Motorcoach Operations in Alexandria and Other Cities

This chapter includes a review of current motorcoach management strategies in Alexandria and nearly a dozen selected localities across the United States. City staff undertook this analysis early in the Task Force process in order to assess opportunities and constraints among other cities that share Alexandria's need to accommodate motorcoaches and large tour buses. Much of this information is easily obtained on-line, but in some cases staff conducted follow-up interviews to clarify or refine the publicly available charts, maps and descriptions. In two cases – Williamsburg, VA and Charleston, SC – staff arranged for the Task Force to hear presentations from representatives of these cities to learn more about their approach to motorcoach management. Meeting conversations are cited in specific detail in the Appendix of this report, which also includes Task Force meeting minutes.

It is important to note that while each city's experience with motorcoach management provides Alexandria with learning opportunities, this review was not conducted with the intent to cut-and-paste management strategies to fit Alexandria. The dense, mixed-use and historic character of Old Town, coupled with the lack of access to large parking locations and no central drop-off area required the Task Force to be selective in its review and subsequent approach to motorcoach management.

Motorcoach Management in Alexandria through 2008

The rules and regulations for motorcoach operations in Alexandria are grounded in City and State regulatory code, as well as several years of proactive efforts by the ACVA to effectively communicate with Alexandria businesses, tour and travel companies, industry associations, and City departments. The City continues to protect and preserve the historic core of its residential neighborhoods while maintaining tour bus access to local businesses, destinations and hotels. Alexandria currently provides motorcoach unloading and loading in six locations in Old Town, one short-term parking location in Old Town, and one long-term (overnight) parking location at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. Currently there are no designated routes into or out of the City, and permit fees are only required for parking at the Masonic Memorial.



ACVA Motorcoach Map.

Unloading & Loading

Motorcoach loading and unloading in Old Town is typically available for more than 10 buses at a time in six locations on or east of Washington Street:



Unloading spot at The Lyceum (200 block of S Washington Street). City of Alexandria.

1. **The Waterfront and Torpedo Factory Arts Center:** One space on the north side of the unit block of King Street for westbound buses, behind the King Street Trolley.
2. **Market Square, Visitors Center and Walking Tours:** Approximately five spaces (270 feet) On the north side of the 300 block of King Street for westbound buses (between Fairfax and Royal Streets)
3. **Gadsby's Museum and Gadsby's Tavern Restaurant:** One space (60 feet) 134-138 North Royal Street, which is on the west side of the street and for southbound buses
4. **Christ Church:** Two spaces (90 feet) on the west side of the 100 block of North Washington Street

for southbound buses except for between 4 and 6 pm on weekdays

5. **The Lyceum:** One space (75 feet) on the west side of the 200 block of South Washington Street for southbound buses except for between 4 and 6 pm on weekdays
6. **The Strand:** Space for multiple bus loading and unloading is allowed, although buses may not block the Old Dominion Boat Club Parking Entrance

Loading and unloading in non-designated areas is prohibited by Sec. 9-12-162 of the City of Alexandria Code and punishable by a \$100 fine. Additionally, City and State code prohibit tour bus idling for more than 10 minutes in commercial and residential areas.

Motorcoach Parking

Motorcoach parking is accommodated in three locations. Free, unreserved **short-term** motorcoach parking exists for four to five buses (250 feet) on the east side of the 500 block of North Union Street beside Robinson Terminal. An additional three spaces of free, unreserved short-term motorcoach parking spaces also exist on the 900 block of N. St. Asaph Street between Montgomery and First streets. The spaces are signed for tour bus parking but there are no existing time constraints or regulations in place.

All motorcoaches staying for a period of 24 hours or more and that are not parked on hotel properties are required to use **long-term** parking at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. Overnight permits are \$35. The Masonic Memorial also allows temporary (**short-term**) parking between 9:00 am and 11:00 pm for \$10 per temporary motorcoach permit parking pass per day. All permits must be obtained in advance from the Alexandria Visitors Center at Ramsay House or may be obtained on-line at www.visitalexandriava.gov.

In May 2008, the ACVA began donating all proceeds from sales of overnight motorcoach parking permits to the American Bus Association Foundation scholarship fund, which provides financial assistance to students working towards a degree in travel and tourism.

Information Availability & ACVA Outreach

The City's primary information mechanism is a brochure, "Motorcoach Rules & Regulations for Historic Alexandria, Virginia," produced by the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association and available on-line at the ACVA website www.visitalexandriava.com. The ACVA also produces copies of the brochure which is stocked in weatherproof canisters at each unloading and parking area.

Since at least 2004, the ACVA has worked to communicate Alexandria's motorcoach rules and regulations to the industry by working collaboratively with local businesses, tour and travel companies, industry associations and City departments. In 2007-08, ACVA contacted the major Alexandria businesses focusing on the tour market via phone and/or personal visits. The businesses contacted include: Alexandria Colonial Tours, Fish Market, Il Porto, Dandy Dinner Cruises, Footsteps to the Past, Buggy's, Dandy Restaurant Cruises, Potomac Riverboat Company, and the Food Court. The ACVA addressed rules/regulations and the permitting process. As a result, a reciprocal link to the ACVA website was requested on individual business websites, and a Motorcoach Usage Calendar for



Short-term motorcoach parking on N Union Street, occupied by tractor trailer. City of Alexandria.

Market Square and the Waterfront was created for participating businesses. Additionally, the motorcoach brochure was provided in electronic format to forward to group clients.

The ACVA notifies and updates hotels, attraction owners, and members of the public via e-mail and personal meetings on a semi-annual schedule, to educate and inform hotel staff on rules and regulations regarding the permitting processes. ACVA also encourages businesses to link to the ACVA motorcoach website and has opened negotiations with the tour coordinator of Mount Vernon to determine the feasibility of reaching motorcoaches touring this estate. ACVA has also revamped its website each year since 2006 with program updates.

The ACVA has also completed the following general activities:

- Contacted major tour operators and guide services including World Strides, New Century Tours, New World Tours, Educational Tours and American Christian Tours to determine frequency of tours visiting Alexandria
- Contacted and distributed “Motorcoach Rules and Regulations for Historic Alexandria” to the National Tour Association, United Motorcoach Association, Pennsylvania Bus Association, American Bus Association, Greater New Jersey Bus Association
- Joined the Professional Tour Guild of Washington, DC and generated an informational kit which includes a letter/brochure/map
- ACVA’s quarterly “Tour and Travel” e-mail includes updates on rules and regulations
- Distributed materials at national touring conventions

Motorcoach Management in Other Cities

For each city reviewed, the write-ups here include brief overviews as well as plans and specific measures for motorcoach management. If possible, distinctive features about each city are noted with particular attention paid to features that may be relevant to Alexandria. The following localities were reviewed:

- Aiken, SC
- Arlington County, VA
- Atlantic City, NJ
- Baltimore, MD
- Boston, MA
- Charleston, SC
- Kennebunkport, ME
- New Orleans, LA
- Philadelphia, PA
- Savannah, GA
- Washington, DC
- Williamsburg, VA

A chart that briefly encapsulates motorcoach management strategies in selected cities is included below. Please refer to the write-ups for more specific information.

Summary of Motorcoach Management Strategies in Other Localities

	Desig. Curb Loading Areas	Desig. Curb Parking Areas	Periph. Long-Term Surface Parking Lots	Central Off-Street Bus Parking Facilities	Prohibit Parking At Transit Stops, Meters, Loading Zones	Allow Parking At Transit Bus Stops, Meters, Loading Zones	Idling Limits	Daily Permit Required For Tour Bus Operation	Prohib. of Operation on Desig. Roads	Desig. of Recmd/Req Routes	Reqd. Transfer to Circul/ Walking	Restrictions on Volume of Tour Bus Operations	Coord. Fee At Parking Facilit.	Reserv/ Regist System	Help Line
Aiken	X	X	X		X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Arlington	2 locations	4 locations		Under study	X	In hardship situations	X								
Atlantic City		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Baltimore	X		3 locations (\$15-\$45)		X						Proposed		X		
Boston	8 locations, 15-min. limit	1 location, 3 hour limit	2 locations	Surface lot close to historic district	X		5 min			X					
Charleston	6 locations	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Kennebunkport	1 location, 10-min. limit		Perm facility location TBD		X		10 min	X		X		X	X (tour guide req'd)		
New Orleans	X				X		10 min		X	X					
Philadelphia	9 locations, 10-min limit			New bus parking facility, open 9 am to 11 pm	X		10 min				Yes- for some sites		\$20/day, addtl. \$10 for overnight	X	X
Savannah	X		X		X		None in Hist. Dist. 10-15 min otherwise	X	X	Indiv. Route plan req'd	X	X	\$10-\$30	X	X
Washington, DC	X	X			X		3 minutes	X	X	X					
Williamsburg	X		X	X			15 min (not required)		X				X	X	

Aiken, SC

In response to residents' desire to curb the number of tour buses entering Aiken's three historic districts and horse district, the City implemented a tourism ordinance that restricts motorcoach access to these areas. The tourism ordinance prohibits all motorcoaches over 40 feet in length from touring the City, and requires smaller buses to obtain a license for touring. Motorcoaches and tour buses are still permitted to discharge passengers, but they must contact the City in advance so the loading/unloading zones and long-term parking spaces can be designated and reserved. The City has implemented an idling restriction of no more than 15 minutes while buses unload/load passengers and tour buses are not allowed to stop in front of residences, businesses, or other locations. Aiken has also established certain time periods which tours can take place and limit the volume of tours within the historic areas.

According to reports from Aiken City staff, the strict guidelines have resulted in a decrease in the number of motorcoaches traveling to the City. In addition, the licensing requirement has deterred companies from operating and providing services for small bus vehicles. According to one city official, the number of tour buses bringing visitors to the City has decreased from approximately 8-10 per year to (2) per year. When visitors arrive in Aiken and seek tours of the historic districts, the only option is to rent a City owned and operated trolley. The number of tours provided by the trolley is limited and a fee of \$12 per rider is charged in addition to an overall rental fee of \$75. Tour guides licensed by the City are provided when tours using the trolley commences.

According to City staff, the result of Aiken's tourism ordinance has been a steep decrease in the number of motorcoaches, tour buses, and visitors traveling into Aiken. The City no longer advertises to group markets and seeks to only attract visitors who travel to Aiken by car. The restrictions have resulted in the City trolley becoming the "only game in town" for tours of the historic and horse districts. Other mechanisms for touring, such as horse-drawn carriages have not developed since the bus restrictions were enacted, mostly because the ordinance was too stringent.

Sources: City of Aiken: City Code of Ordinances, Tourism Ordinance; City of Aiken, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. Phone Interview with Barbara Gassman.

Arlington County

Arlington accommodates tour bus parking through the designation of specific parking areas managed by its Transportation Engineering Division. Tour bus parking outside of the designated areas or zones is a violation of County law and is enforced by the Police Department. Tour bus parking areas are defined according to the parking duration. Tour buses are not permitted to park at parking meters, except in special situations, in which significant hardship can be proven and requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If a permit is approved for use of metered parking spaces, the County charges an administrative fee and cost recovery for meter revenue. Buses are not permitted to park on the street overnight or for longer than three hours at designated tour bus parking zones. Short-term (2 or 3 hours depending on location) tour bus parking and active loading/unloading is permitted on designated streets. No designated dwell time is specified since it is expected buses will vacate zones after passengers board or alight.

Source: Arlington Co. website >>

<http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/EnvironmentalServices/dot/traffic/parking/EnvironmentalServicesTour.aspx> (April 21, 2008).

Atlantic City

The South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA) regulates motorcoach traffic traveling to Atlantic City. Motorcoaches destined to Atlantic City are required to purchase a permit two weeks in advance directly from the SJTA. Upon receipt of a permit motorcoach operators may enter the City and travel to their destination along specified routes. After discharging their passengers, the bus operator must immediately travel to one of the two SJTA designated bus parking facilities. Drivers are not permitted to circulate within the City or stop at any other location after unloading their passengers.

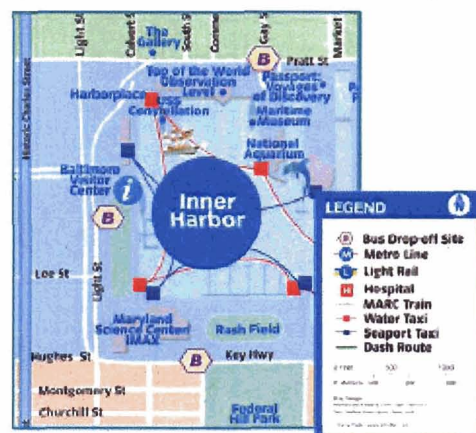


Approved Atlantic City routes. Source: SJTA.

To better assist motorcoach operators the SJTA has established a toll free telephone number for the Atlantic City office which is available 24 hours per day, seven days a week. In addition, information regarding SJTA's regulations and illustrative maps of Atlantic City are provided on SJTA's website. Source: South Jersey Transportation Authority >> <http://www2.sjta.com/sjta/busmanage.asp> (April 21, 2008). South Jersey Transportation Authority, Bus Management Division.

Baltimore, MD

Baltimore established designated loading zones and long-term parking areas within the City to accommodate motorcoaches. Loading and unloading zones at the Inner Harbor are separated into three geographic areas: West, North/East, and South. At each of these locations the City has established loading zones on specific streets or adjacent to major attractions. Motorcoaches are not permitted to stage/idle except at the South Area zone and for only 10 minutes at this location. Layover parking and overnight parking is available at three locations. Each location requires the payment of a fee which can fluctuate from \$15-45 depending on the location and time of year. The fee is collected by the parking facility and it is unknown if the City recuperates any of these funds. Overnight and multiple day parking are permitted in certain lots. The City is authorized to issue traffic citations with fines up to \$102 to prevent operators from loading, staging, or parking their motorcoaches in unauthorized locations. No information on route restrictions within Baltimore was discovered. The Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association disseminate information regarding motorcoach loading and parking regulations. Information is available on their website.



Inner Harbor motorcoach parking. Source: BACVA.

Sources: Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association. Motor Coach Parking Information. >> http://www.baltimore.org/groups_tours/gt_motor.html (April 21, 2008)

Boston, MA

In an effort to assist tour bus operators traveling within Boston, the City has created a Tour Bus Parking Guidelines map. A product of the Tourism Transportation Task Force, the map displays proper routes of travel, designated loading areas, and the location of layover parking facilities. The City also relies on system of street signage to inform bus operators of regulations that apply within certain areas. The map and flier include information about the types of signs and regulations that have been distributed to tour bus companies and available on-line.

These tour bus maps highlight major highways and arterial roads within downtown Boston as well as the locations of major attractions and hotels. No specific restrictions on routing currently exist, but the map does outline a specific “tour bus route.” Loading zones for passenger drop offs and pick-ups are listed, and a detailed legend specifies the exact location and amount of time operators are permitted to stay within each zone. The maximum time allowed for parking and discharging/picking-up varies from 15 minutes to 3 hours. Buses are prohibited from parking or loading/unloading in metered spaces, commercial zones and at transit bus stops. Finally, Boston restricts buses from idling for longer than five minutes when loading/unloading or parking. A layover parking facility for drivers is also available within Boston outside the City’s historic and urban core.

Sources: City of Boston, Department of Transportation. Boston Tour Bus Parking website, Boston Tour Bus Drop-Off/Pick-up and Layover Parking Map, and Tour Bus Regulations >> http://www.cityofboston.gov/transportation/tour_bus.asp. (April 21, 2008). District of Columbia. District of Columbia Tour Bus Management Initiative Final Report (2004).



Tour Bus Drop-Off, Pick-Up and Layover Parking map, 2008. Source: Boston Transportation Dept.

Charleston, SC

The City of Charleston's Director of Tourism Vanessa Turner-Maybank addressed the Motorcoach Task Force on August 11, 2008. Ms. Turner-Maybank told the Task Force, Charleston has attempted to strike a balance between the need for tour buses and motorcoaches as a way of bringing people to the City, while preserving the City's sensitive historic and residential surroundings. (Ms. Maybank's presentation, including question-and-answer session, is available in the Task Force meeting minutes from August 11.)

Charleston issues certificates or permits as a means to control the number of tour buses entering the City's old and historic district. Certificates are only issued to small tour buses, while large buses require a permit. Additionally, to offset the cost of touring by bus the City may impose a fifty-cent fee on individuals participating in a tour on a motorcoach. The City also requires all tours for hire to be conducted by a registered City tour guide. Finally, to manage the traffic flow of tour buses and motorcoaches, Charleston designated specific routes that tour vehicles must use during travel. It is the duty of Charleston's Tourism Management Division to oversee the daily management of tourism related operations within the City.

The City of Charleston Tourism Ordinance (Chapter 29) serves as the guiding policy document for the City's motorcoach management strategies.

Key points regarding the ordinance are outlined below:

- Persons acting as a tour guide for hire must be licensed by the City.
- General Regulations:
 - o No vehicle of any kind conducting a tour shall stop or stand at a point of interest. Vehicles must remain as part of normal traffic flow.
 - o Tours in small or large buses are prohibited from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m.
 - o No buses may park with engines idling for more than 5 minutes in residential areas.
- **Small Bus:** includes vehicles 25 feet or less in length and used for the purpose of touring for hire.
 - o Must be issued a certificate of appropriateness
 - o Generally, small buses may operate on all streets within the historic district (except on cobblestone/brick streets and several designated roads).
 - o *Regularly Scheduled Small Bus Tours:* must submit a schedule of touring to the City, which is used to assign and designate routes that buses must follow.
 - o *Other Scheduled Small Bus Tours:* small buses that do not regularly operate tours must notify the City at least 24 hours in advance of a tour in order to receive an assigned route to follow.



Large tour bus routes. Source: City of Charleston.

- No small bus tour shall take place without a City licensed tour guide (guide card must be displayed in windshield).
- Pick up and discharge of passengers must occur only at designated City loading zones.
- Parking of small buses can only occur at designated locations: including the visitor center, designated attractions, and on certain streets.
- No more than 36 small buses can be operated on streets within the City at any one time.
- **Large Bus:** vehicles longer than 25 feet in length but not longer than 40 feet, used for the purpose of touring.
 - Large buses must acquire a touring permit from the City in order to conduct tours. A separate permit for each trip into districts is required and permits must be displayed in the windshield.
 - Large buses may operate only on a perimeter route and on two arterial roads. Arterial roads, which access downtown can not be used from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 pm.
 - All large buses conducting tours must have a licensed tour guide on board (guide card displayed in windshield).
 - Pick up and discharge of passengers must occur only at designated City passenger loading zones.
 - *Nontouring Purposes:* large buses may enter the district upon issuance of permit which specifies the route and designated loading/unloading point. Buses must depart district after drop off and only enter (along a designated route) to pick up passengers.
 - Parking for large buses is available at a single location.
 - Permit Issuance Restrictions: no more than 6 permits issued per hour between 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.. No more than 4 permits are issued between 12:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 pm.
 - Two perimeter zones specify specific routes for large buses and permits for these routes are issued by the City in an alternating fashion.

Source: City of Charleston website >> <http://www.charlestoncity.info/dept/content.aspx?nid=86> (April 21, 2008) Phone interview with City of Charleston staff Mary-Margaret Baker and Vanessa Turner-Maybank on May 26, 2008.

Kennebunkport, ME

In an effort to provide for passage on roads and reduce traffic congestion, the Town of Kennebunkport enacted an ordinance to regulate the operation of motorcoaches. The town considers a motorcoach a vehicle designed to carry more than 15 persons. Motorcoaches are permitted to discharge and pickup passengers only at authorized locations within the town for a maximum period of 10 minutes. During these periods buses are prohibited from idling. In addition, buses are excluded from parking, standing, and loading or unloading on select streets. The town uses an advanced notification system for tour buses that require motorcoaches to notify the town three days in advance of any arrival. Also, motorcoach operators issue a permit that is valid for one arrival and one departure. Finally, the number of motorcoaches permitted within the town is limited to 10 at any given time between the hours of 9:00 a.m.- 7:00 p.m.

Sources: Town of Kennebunkport. Town Ordinances. Traffic and Parking Control Ordinances (12B) >> http://www.kennebunkportme.gov/Public_Documents/KennebunkportME_Ord/traffic (April 21, 2008)

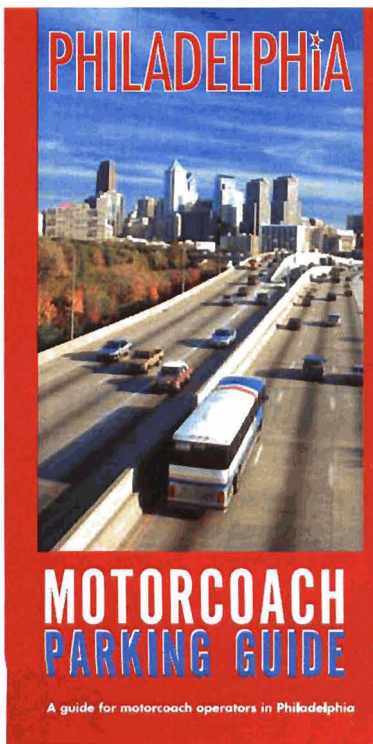
New Orleans, LA

In the City of New Orleans motorcoaches operate for the purpose of conducting tours and must use a driver and tour guide licensed by the City. In addition, the New Orleans Code of Ordinances regulate the routes motorcoaches can travel and areas buses are permitted to enter. The Code outlines three areas where limitations on travel exist: the Garden District, Vieux Carre, and East New Orleans.

1. Garden District: The City restricts motorcoaches from entering the Garden District if their capacity is over 20 passenger seats. Coaches receiving or discharging passengers traveling to the Garden District can only do so in authorized zones. Similar parking zones for buses waiting to receive passengers have been established in specific areas. Buses with a capacity over 20 passenger seats are restricted from parking in the Garden District and an idling restriction of 10 minutes is in place for all motorcoaches.
2. Vieux Carre: Motorcoaches that exceed 31 feet in length are prohibited from entering Vieux Carre and buses with lengths greater than 20 feet but less than 31 feet are only permitted on certain routes within the area. The City established a perimeter route around Vieux Carre that all buses can traverse, but it is unclear if authorized loading or parking zones have been established on this route. Finally, idling restrictions of 10 minutes, with no standing restrictions of 15 minutes are currently in place.
3. East New Orleans: The City does not permit touring by bus of any kind in east of the Industrial Canal Zone.

Sources: City of New Orleans Code of Ordinances. Accessed via Municode.com from <http://www.cityofno.com/pg-1-42-municipal-code-of-ordinances.aspx> (May 14, 2008)

Philadelphia, PA



Philadelphia Motorcoach Parking Guide. Source: Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Philadelphia implemented new motorcoach parking regulations in 2004 in an effort to improve traffic and parking within the central city and historic district. Currently, the city prohibits motorcoaches from parking on city streets and from loading/unloading passengers outside of designated areas within Philadelphia's historic district. These new regulations were put in place after the city opened the Callowhill Bus Center (CBC).

The CBC provides 43 secured spaces for daily and overnight motorcoach parking. The CBC has bathroom, shower and lounge facilities for motorcoach operators at a daily cost of \$20 per motorcoach and \$30 for overnight parking. In addition to providing parking facilities, the city has also designated certain areas as bus loading/unloading zones. The Independence Transportation Center (ITC) located adjacent to the Independence National Historic Park has 11 spaces for passenger pick up and discharge. There are also 10 loading/unloading zones located throughout the city near major attractions.

To better guide motorcoach operators the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau has produced a pamphlet and map outlining the above mentioned information.

Sources: Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau >>

<http://www.philadelphiausa.travel/philadelphia-page.php?tid=517&pageid=30> (April 21, 2008).

Philadelphia Motorcoach Travel Guide.

Savannah, GA

The City of Savannah has enacted a comprehensive Tour Service Ordinance to manage the daily operations of the tourism industry. The strategy is similar to the one used in Charleston, SC and aims to prevent large buses from entering the historic core. To enforce this code the City requires that all motorcoaches over 34 feet in length have a daily permit for operation within the historic district. The permit is issued by the City and includes information on the date, destination, purpose of the trip, and must be publicly displayed. The City issues three types of permits: (1) Transportation Permit, required for traveling in the historic district; (2) Touring Permit, required for touring purposes and (3) Combination Permit, required for one day of touring and seventy-two hours of transportation. The City also requires tours of the historic district be conducted by registered tour guides only.

The City established restricted areas that are off limits to motorcoaches with a length greater than 34 feet. In addition, the City has designated certain areas as loading/unloading zones for passengers. Bus operators are only permitted to remain in the loading zone for 10 minutes when discharging passengers and 15 minutes when picking up passengers. Once passengers have been discharged, motorcoaches must relocate to designated parking/holding zones at the periphery of the historic district. The City does not permit engine idling in the historic district, although unlimited idling zones do exist in certain parking/holding areas. To aid bus operators the City produced a map illustrating the information above.

Sources: City of Savannah, Savannah Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. Tour Ordinance Guidelines >> http://www.savannahvisit.com/groups_tourservices.asp (April 21, 2008). District of Columbia. District of Columbia Tour Bus Management Initiative Final Report (2004).

Washington, DC

The District of Columbia Department of Transportation (DDOT) is one of several primary points of contact for motorcoach events routes and provides a motorcoach guide to the City on its website. Effective August 1, 2007, the District of Columbia enacted a law that requires a bus from any US state or Canadian province used for travel of a chartered party with a seating capacity of greater than fifteen (15) passengers, to register and/or obtain a trip permit for travel in DC. The permit system has been upheld once by the courts.

The City police department enforces permits and any vehicle owner that uses a trip permit for a vehicle other than the one listed on the front of the trip permit is subject to a fine of not more than \$500 or 180 days imprisonment or both. Permits are non-transferable and vehicles that do not have trip permits may be assessed a \$500 fine. DDOT also promotes idling limits of three minutes except when the outside temperature is below 32 degrees Fahrenheit (buses must have their motors off when parked or may be fined \$500. A standing vehicle that is not loading or unloading passengers is considered to be "parked" regardless of whether the engine is on and the fine for violation is \$250).

The District does not allow tour bus parking or standing on some streets and information regarding street closings can be obtained from the DC Government web site at http://dc.gov/closures/closures_by_type.asp?type=4 or by phone from the Office of Emergency Preparedness at (202) 727-3159. Finally, all motorcoaches providing city tours must have a licensed DC Guide on board at all times.

Many of the DC management initiatives emerged from an October 2003 report prepared for DDOT, National Capital Planning Commission, Washington Convention & Tourism Corp and other groups. The objective of the initiative was to develop a plan to ameliorate tour bus problems related to noise, traffic, safety risks, parking, etc. The Final Report is the result of a study performed by Volpe for the initiative. The study was based on three major sources of information: A review of best practices in North American and European cities; interviews with tour bus operators and stakeholders and field observation of tour bus operations. The primary conclusion of this study focused on parking and principally that DC needed to find parking outside the downtown area (peripheral parking), provide structured parking facilities downtown and on-street or off-street surface parking located close to major points of interest. The study also considered distribution strategies with two studied: (a) Distribution by tour bus (i.e. door-to-door); (b) Distribution by Alternative Mode (i.e. Circulator systems). The study recommended developing a Tour Bus Management Plan. (DC currently has a "Motorcoach Guide to Washington" which is posted on-line and includes designated routes, parking locations, registration/permit requirement, National Park Service information and restrictions, radio stations and general information).

Motorcoach carriers coming to the 2009 Presidential Inauguration were mandated to follow specific guidelines before coming to the District for the swearing in, parade and other inaugural activities.

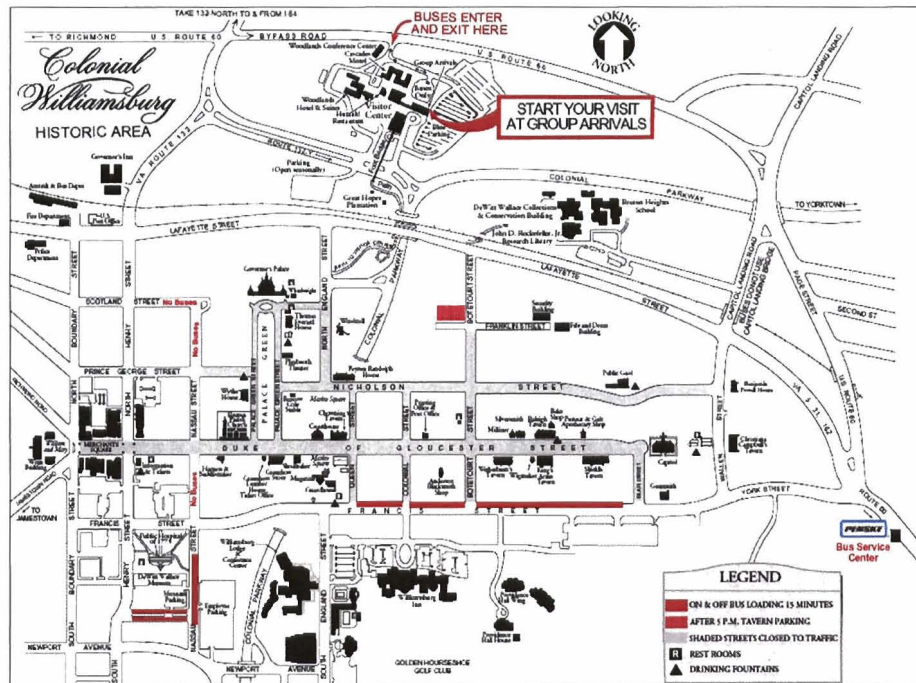
Sources: District of Columbia, DDOT Motorcoach Guide to Washington >> <http://www.ddot.dc.gov/ddot/cwp/view,a,1250,q,639306.asp>. District of Columbia. District of Columbia Tour Bus Management Initiative Final Report (2004). The Inauguration 2009 website provided updated information about bus trips >> <http://www.inauguration.dc.gov/bus.asp> (accessed December 14, 2008).

Williamsburg, VA

Williamsburg Police Chief Mike Yost addressed the Task Force on June 23, 2008 and made several key points:

- Williamsburg is different from Alexandria in that there is comparatively little residential housing near the historic area and Colonial Williamsburg
- The City learned that it could communicate effectively with motorcoach operators but not necessarily drivers
- Two distinct types of buses visit Williamsburg. The first are buses that schedule trips to Colonial Williamsburg (CW). These buses, which may number in excess of 500 per day during the summer, are managed by CW and pose few issues for the City. The second set of buses that visit Williamsburg are not scheduled through CW. The City has not performed counts of these buses and does not have any hard estimates of visitation. However, the City seeks to encourage these buses to use the Penske site and abide by rules posted on the City website.
- Williamsburg has developed and is currently improving its wayfinding sign program
- The city has posted “No Thru Bus” signs at three neighborhoods adjacent to Colonial Williamsburg

The core historic area, Colonial Williamsburg, contains several historic streets, structures and attractions. Certain streets within the historic area are completely closed to motor vehicle traffic of any kind. A visitor center, located on the north side of the historic area, serves as the main staging area for group visits. The city has implemented certain policies to manage tour buses and motor coaches. The city code of ordinances governs mainly the operation – standing, parking, use of certain streets – of motor coaches. Within the historic area certain streets prohibit through bus traffic and the city has also designated certain streets for loading/unloading passengers. The city requests, but does not mandate, that bus operators do not idle their engines any longer than what is absolutely necessary. A 15 minute time limitation is in place for picking up and discharging passengers within the designated loading zones and buses/coaches are prohibited from parking in those areas. Long-term parking is available at the visitor center, while overnight parking is available at motels in the surrounding area.



Williamsburg Motorcoach Parking/Routes Map. Source: City of Williamsburg.

In 2006, to further manage and accommodate tour buses and coaches traveling to Colonial Williamsburg a tour bus center was built. The center, funded by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and operated by Penske, provides long-term and overnight parking, driver's lounge facilities, and a service center. The Penske Center is open seven days a week from 7:00AM-11:00PM on weekdays and 7:00AM-3:30PM on weekends. Currently the center is not experiencing the level of use the city had hoped for and this is mainly the result of a poor signage and the center's location away from the visitor center and main attractions.

The Williamsburg Police Department is the lead agency in charge of disseminating information regarding tour bus operations within Colonial Williamsburg and the enforcement of tour bus regulations. The Department's website contains information on the regulations currently in place and a link to information on the Penske Center. Additionally, a map of the historic area which indicates street closures, loading zones and parking facilities is available online. According to the police department, enforcement of current motor coach rules and regulations consists mainly of informing bus operators of any violations they commit and then directing them to proper parking or loading locations.

Sources: *City of Williamsburg, Police Department. Phone interview with Jay Sexton and police Chief Mike Yost (May 27, 2008). City of Williamsburg, Police Department website >> <http://www.williamsburgva.gov/Index.aspx?page=455> (May 27, 2008)*

III. Motorcoach Transportation – Residential Concerns and Industry Perspective

In the course of its work, the Motorcoach Task Force sought to incorporate input from residents as well as the motorcoach industry associations and local companies that rely on the use of motorcoaches either for transportation or access to destinations in Old Town.

At its initial meetings, the Task Force received and reviewed extensive reports provided by the 2005 ACVA Motorcoach Task Force and a report entitled “Motorcoaches and Tourism Policy in Alexandria, Virginia” prepared by the Old & Historic District Residents Group (OHDRG). These reports provided necessary background and – when coupled with residential comments at the meetings – helped emphasize the primary residential concerns about motorcoach transportation in Old Town. Additionally, the Old Town Civic Association executive board provided a “Statement of Constraints” document that outlined many of its concerns and residents provided specific comments at a special meeting on October 8, 2008. These documents were provided to the Task Force by the OTCA. Finally, it should be noted that residents’ comments were included in meeting minutes. All of the noted documents are attached as appendices to this report.

RESIDENTIAL CONCERNS

Residents provided specific comments and suggestions for motorcoach management at numerous meetings and offered comments for the record via reports, civic association statements and letters to the editor. As noted, these documents are attached to this report in the Appendix but the range of issues was extensive and included attempts to quantify the costs to infrastructure, structures/historic buildings, community livability, public safety and traffic congestion. Residents also strongly supported the encouragement of more walking tours and more involvement by the Office of Historic Alexandria.

Additionally, an Old Town Civic Association “Statement of Constraints” notes that:

- *Old Town contains a substantial number of older, irreplaceable structures which give Old Town its unique historical character that attracts permanent residents to Old Town as well as businesses and visitors, including tourists.*
- *The presence of an excess number of motor-coaches, other types of vehicles, and pedestrians in Old Town has a deleterious impact on the ambiance and quality-of-life, particularly for Old Town residents, and the physical integrity Old Town’s historic structures.*
- *Large motor-coaches have difficulty traveling on Old Town streets, they add to and impede traffic, and they often experience difficulty in turning onto narrow streets, notably Lee Street, especially when automobiles are parked on the street close to a corner*

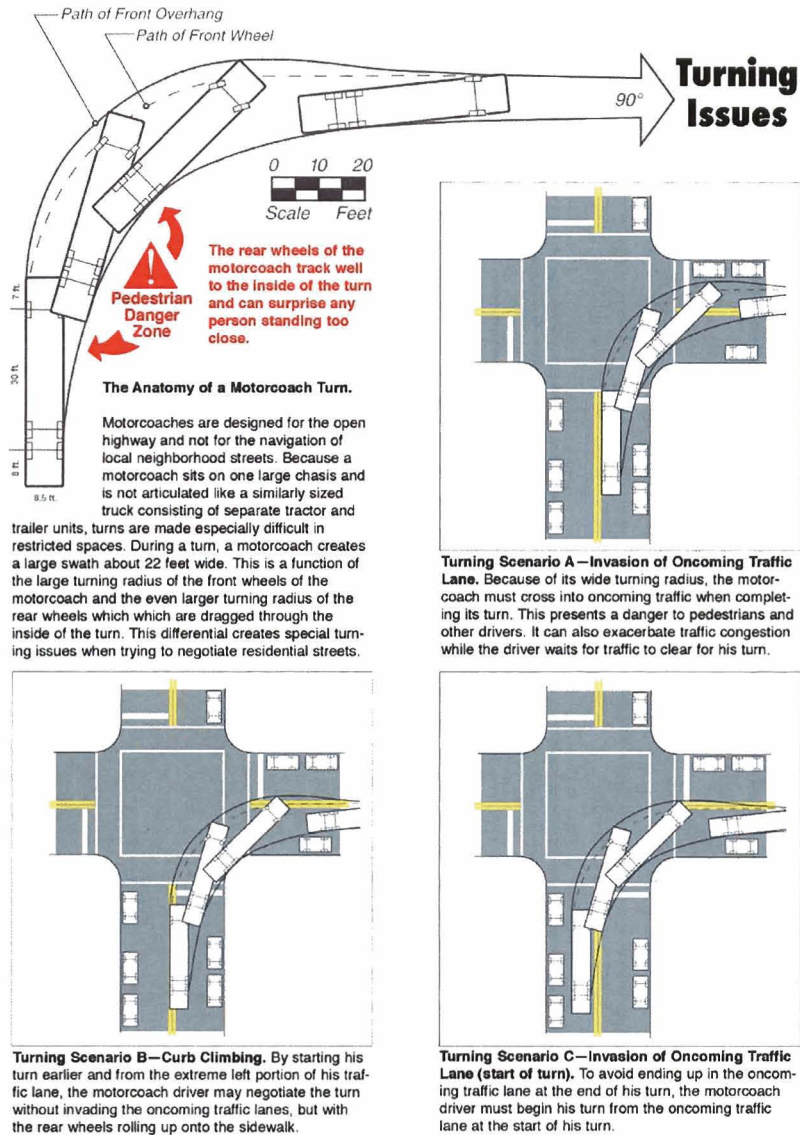
Although it was not possible to include all residential concerns in this document, the primary residential issues and concerns tended to fall into three categories:

1. **Motorcoach Size**
2. **Motorcoach Emissions, Noise & Vibrations**
3. **Motorcoach Volume**

Motorcoach Size

Motorcoaches are typically 45 feet long, 12-13 ½ feet high and 8 ½ feet wide – the maximums allowed by state and federal law. Motorcoach must also comply with federal and state laws (i.e. Va. Code §46.2-1139) that prohibit (with limited exceptions) any vehicle that exceeds 80,000 pounds gross vehicle weight from using interstate highways and prohibits any one axle from carrying loads in excess of 20,000 pounds. The motorcoach industry itself reports that “over-the-road (OTRB) buses, like traditional transit buses, have been carrying progressively more weight on each axel... (and) as a consequence, fully-loaded OTRBs approach and sometimes exceed federal axel weight restrictions” (See American Bus Association Position Paper, Nov. 2006.)

The gross weight of a fully-loaded motorcoach varies (the ABA argues that it rarely exceeds 55,000 pounds) but Task Force members generally agreed that these vehicles have difficulty navigating streets in Alexandria, particularly in the Old & Historic District where narrow street rights-of-way (typically 66’ but as narrow as 30’) and narrow building-to-building widths create a smaller sense of scale and enclosure. The OHDRG report notes: “The size, weight, limited sight-lines and non-articulated nature of the motorcoach makes them difficult to maneuver on the narrower streets that characterize the older parts of a city and its residential areas” (p. v-4) and includes a graphic (right, p. v-5) regarding turning movements.



Motorcoach Turning Issues Graphic from OHDRG Report (v-5)

Motorcoach Emissions, Noise & Vibrations

Residents expressed concerns about motorcoach noise (reported in the OHDRG as around 83 dBA) and traffic vibrations caused by motorcoaches and the potential impact on historic structures in the Old Town Historic District. While noting and recognizing that some uncertainty surrounds the issues of noise traffic vibrations, the Task Force joined residents in expressing concern about the lack of clarity over idling. Because of discrepancies in the city and state code regarding idling (see page 28) there is misinformation about idling on city/ACVA publications and on street signs.

Residents point out that “Old Town is already heavily traveled by many types of diesel-powered trucks, trash trucks and buses that serve the commercial and residential community. Motorcoaches also employ diesel engines ... and their numbers have increased... (meaning) Old Town is significantly exposed to diesel exhaust and that exposure is not declining” (OHDRG, v-3)

Motorcoach Volume

The number of motorcoaches visiting Alexandria was a key point of concern for all the represented civic associations on the Task Force as well as residents who attended meetings and submitted comments. Several residents at the Community Meeting on January 26, 2009 said they perceived a very high number of buses pass through Alexandria en route between Washington, DC and Mount Vernon. The Task Force received reports through the ACVA from George Washington’s Mount Vernon Estate that tracked the number of buses arriving daily between May and July 2007 and 2008. The numbers are reflected in Figure 3.2 and 3.3 on the ensuing pages. Mount Vernon estimates that between 40% and 60% of bus arrivals are school buses that do not “tour” en-route.

The ACVA conducted a survey of its members to determine how many motorcoaches were using the Market Square to loading/unloading during the months of April-June 2008. The arrivals were reported to the ACVA by four members (restaurants and touring companies) and do not reflect on-site counts or all buses that used the space during this period. However, the figures from four reports range from a few as 1 bus per day (typically on Sundays) to as many as 20 buses on Wednesday, May 14, 2008. In all, the four companies reported visits by 225 buses in April, 280 in May and 183 in June.

The ACVA reported that some 135 motorcoaches had used the long-term parking at the Masonic Temple for overnight parking and 48 buses parked there from 2006-08.

As a result of the uncertainty over the reported volume of buses, the Task Force agreed to recommend to City Council that the City’s Department of Transportation & Environmental Services conduct cordon counts of motorcoaches entering the City and coaches that use each of the city’s loading/unloading and parking areas during representative peak weeks in March through June 2009.

Figure 3.2: Mount Vernon Bus Arrivals – 2007 (as reported by Mount Vernon)

June 19, 2008

TO: Alexandria Motor Coach Task Force
 FROM: Stephanie Brown, President & CEO, ACVA
 SUBJECT: Motor Coach Volume at Mount Vernon

Mount Vernon provided the following estimate of motor coach volume per day. This chart was compiled for a parking lot study and is based on actual ticket sales during May, June and July 2007. May represents a typical peak month and July represents a typical non-peak month.

May	Buses	June	Buses	July	Buses
1	77	1	100	1	9
2	99	2	60	2	21
3	109	3	93	3	19
4	122	4	47	4	22
5	66	5	98	5	17
6	48	6	94	6	15
7	61	7	104	7	10
8	68	8	78	8	11
9	103	9	68	9	17
10	143	10	92	10	12
11	159	11	54	11	21
12	63	12	105	12	14
13	31	13	106	13	9
14	32	14	58	14	19
15	61	15	65	15	24
16	100	16	46	16	22
17	125	17	49	17	14
18	112	18	36	18	9
19	65	19	43	19	9
20	52	20	59	20	17
21	39	21	49	21	10
22	70	22	30	22	14
23	108	23	38	23	5
24	131	24	41	24	7
25	69	25	26	25	12
26	56	26	26	26	10
27	80	27	16	27	10
28	34	28	23	28	7
29	58	29	18	29	8
30	118	30	15	30	9
31	126	Average	58	31	6
Average	83			Average	13

Figure 3.3: Mount Vernon Bus Arrivals – 2008 (as reported by Mount Vernon)

May	Busses	June	Busses	July	Busses
1	70	1	91	1	8
2	90	2	55	2	19
3	99	3	84	3	18
4	111	4	43	4	20
5	60	5	89	5	15
6	44	6	85	6	13
7	55	7	95	7	9
8	62	8	71	8	10
9	93	9	62	9	15
10	130	10	84	10	10
11	145	11	49	11	19
12	57	12	95	12	12
13	28	13	96	13	8
14	29	14	52	14	17
15	56	15	59	15	22
16	91	16	42	16	20
17	114	17	44	17	13
18	102	18	33	18	8
19	59	19	39	19	8
20	47	20	54	20	16
21	36	21	45	21	9
22	64	22	27	22	13
23	98	23	35	23	4
24	119	24	37	24	6
25	63	25	24	25	11
26	51	26	23	26	9
27	73	27	15	27	9
28	31	28	21	28	7
29	53	29	17	29	7
30	107	30	14	30	8
31	114			31	6

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

During its work, the Task Force heard from the two primary industry associations, United Motorcoach Association and the American Bus Association, and from a major carrier, World Strides. The Task Force also scheduled a trip aboard a New World Tours motorcoach and provided time for Alexandria-based touring companies to address the group regarding the use of sightseeing buses with step-on guides. This section includes a brief review of industry input and a summary of primary findings by the Task Force.

About the United Motorcoach Association



The United Motorcoach Association (UMA) was founded in 1971 as the United Bus Owners of America and its membership now includes over 900 motorcoach companies. Another 215 motorcoach manufacturers, suppliers and related businesses are currently “associate” members. The purpose of this Association is to protect and promote the interests and welfare of privately owned common carriers of passengers by motorcoach. UMA’s offices are located at 113 S. West Street in Alexandria. The UMA was represented at Motorcoach Task Force meetings by its president, Victor Parra, and vice-president, Ken Presley.

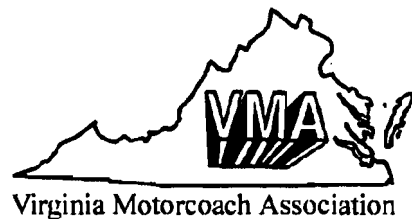
About the American Bus Association

The American Bus Association is a motorcoach, tour and travel association that represents more than 65 percent of all private buses on the highways, as well as private travel related businesses, state and local government travel and tourism offices, state associations and other entities involved in promoting travel throughout North America. The ABA was represented at Motorcoach Task Force meetings by its president and chief executive officer, Peter J. Pantuso.



Major Tour Operators

A number of major tour operators stop or pass through Alexandria including Martz/Gray Lines, World Strides, New Century Tours, New World Tours and others. Although it is not possible to provide traffic counts or data on all these companies, one tour company did provide the Task Force with measurable data. World Strides, which says it is the largest student travel company in the world, provides trips for between 500,000 and 600,000 students per year. The company provided the following figures for Alexandria: Between April 1 and July 1, 2008, the company booked over 7,000 hotel rooms in the City, brought 1,124 buses into the City (approximately 12 per day) and fed 53,396 people.



Alexandria Touring Companies

At least four and possibly other Alexandria-based touring companies provide motorcoach sightseeing and walking tours in Old Town. These companies include Alexandria Footsteps to the Past, Alexandria Colonial Tours, Alexandria Tours and Old Town Experience. In a letter to the Task Force dated September 30 and during a subsequent follow-up presentation on November 10, Ms. Betty Ward of Alexandria Footsteps to the Past reported that more than 4,000 people scheduled tours with the company between July 1 and September 29, 2008. The company also reported a figure of between \$2,000 and \$3,000 in benefits to the City due to each sightseeing motorcoach.

Although it was not possible for the City to verify these figures or track direct expenditures by motorcoach passengers, city staff did seek additional information from the Business License Office in the Department of Finance about the direct economic benefit to the City of sightseeing companies. Information including aggregate gross receipts and aggregate amount of taxes paid for tax years 2004-08 is available although the Task Force agreed not to seek this data because of its sensitive nature.

Key Issues addressed by the Industry Representatives and Local Business

Each industry and/or association representative was provided time during a regular Task Force meeting to present issues and answer questions from Task Force representatives. Although the range of issues covered was extensive, the questions centered on three general categories: (a) Size, Emissions and Bus Impacts, (b) Designated Routes & Parking and (c) Bus Benefits.

Size, Emissions and Bus Impacts

Each of the industry representatives reiterated that motorcoaches are limited by federal law at 45-feet in length, 8.5 feet in width and 13-feet, 6-inches in height. As noted above, they told the Task Force that their industry asserts that motorcoaches rarely exceed 55,000 gross vehicle weight.

The industry generally supports efforts to reduce unnecessary, long-duration diesel engine idling. However, there is quite a bit of misinformation on the topic. There are discrepancies in the Code of Virginia and Alexandria City Code regarding idling. According to the Code of Virginia (§46.2-1224.1), cities may establish a 15-minute limit on idling for buses that are parked, left unattended or stopped for any reason other than traffic, maintenance of loading or unloading a disabled passenger.

The Alexandria City Code (Sec. 9-12-164) sections regarding sight-seeing buses stipulates that drivers of “a parked bus shall turn off the vehicle’s motor for the period the vehicle is parked in the designated space.” Virginia Administrative Code 9 VAC5-40-5670 and Title 11, Chapter 1 of the City of Alexandria Code prohibit tour bus idling for more than 10 minutes in commercial and residential areas.

Designated Routes & Parking

Most industry representatives encouraged the City to strike a balance that addressed designated routes and parking. Association representatives and touring companies each expressed concern that use of a jitney service would be difficult to implement and that if some type of parking area or central transfer point were implemented, it would require facilities for drivers. Because touring companies typically plan routes, the representatives were optimistic that a system of designated routes could be communicated to drivers. Together, the UMA and ABA represent over three-quarters of the approximately 3,000 registered motorcoach operators and those who do not belong to either association are often one- and two-bus operators. The Associations do not provide guidance on specific routes in localities but do provide communications assistance through their industry newsletters and electronic messages.

Industry representatives and touring companies were strongly supportive of directional signage, which is considered vital for route-finding purposes even though many buses use GPS for navigational purposes.

Bus Benefits

Industry representatives told the Task Force that motorcoaches are regarded as a clean and environmentally-friendly form of mass transportation. According to recent reports in The Washington Post and a study by the Union of Concerned Scientists “the mode of transport with the smallest carbon footprint is the motorcoach.”¹

Estimates vary widely of the economic benefits of motorcoaches, but industry representatives reported that the motorcoach industry continues to see growth beyond students and seniors with a noticeable uptick in high-end baby-boomer customers.

Industry representatives were ambivalent about the prospect of additional fees or permitting but strongly committed to working collaboratively with the Task Force. There was concern that burdensome permitting fees or processes would drive business away from Alexandria.

¹ “How Green Was My Vacay,” Coming and Going, The Washington Post, December 14, 2008.

IV. Primary Issues

In the course of its study, the Motorcoach Task Force sought input from residents, business and industry representatives to identify the primary issues related to motorcoach management in Alexandria. Input directly from the Old Town Civic Association (OTCA), Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association and Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, among others, greatly assisted the Task Force in its development of a framework to properly address motorcoach issues. In particular, a "Statement of Constraints" adopted by the OTCA Board of Directors on October 30, 2008 and a list of concerns communicated by OTCA membership at its regular meeting on October 8, 2008 were immeasurably helpful.

Over the summer, the Task Force heard alternately from industry representatives and cities such as Charleston, SC and Williamsburg, VA as it considered the opportunities and constraints of presented by motorcoach transportation. However, by late July that Task Force determined that it had sufficient background to begin formulating a list of primary issues that would provide a framework for future motorcoach management. The Task Force used a nominal group process to collaboratively and methodically develop a collection of problem statements that were categorized generally under issues such as "parking" or "designated routes."

The nominal group process was designed to allow an opportunity for Task Force members to communicate individual concerns through small groups and, ultimately, vet them through the entire 15-person Task Force. In the initial list phase of issue formulation, the Task Force followed a round-robin process to record each issue on oversized memo sheets. The list was large: Some 38 different topics for consideration. By subsequently clarifying each idea and "voting" using colored dots, the Task Force members were able to group the issues into subsets deemed to be of greatest importance and those that offered the greatest opportunity for action.

The list below is presented in order of priority and each issue/category included a recommendation about whether it should be addressed using short-term and/or long-term solutions.

- 1. Lack of designated routes puts coaches on sensitive streets/safety (short-term)**
- 2. Lack of short term & overnight parking (short-term and long-term)**
- 3. Enforcement (short-term and long-term)**
- 4. Loading and unloading (short-term)**
- 5. Communication/Education (short-term)**

Staff formulated a sample (or "blank") Motorcoach Task Force Issues Matrix to provide a working structure for the group's remaining meetings and allow the group to focus its concerns on certain key areas. A completed matrix is provided on the following pages. The remainder of this section is devoted to specific discussion of each primary issue area and the subsequent recommendations.

MOTORCOACH TASK FORCE ISSUES MATRIX

GENERAL CATEGORY	ISSUE	CURRENT SITUATION/CHANGES SINCE 2005	SHORT TERM	LONG TERM	FEASIBILITY (High, Medium, Low)	IMPACTS ON:					
						Bus Operators	Citizens	Business	Visitors	Environment	Public Parking Supply
Parking	Explore whether to designate <u>new short-term parking</u> within and/or peripheral to Old Town.	4-5 short-term parking spaces exist at Robinson Terminal on Union Street. **No changes since 2005.	X		Medium, though unlikely in Old Town. Peripheral locations must be functional	Positive. Short-term parking spaces are needed.	Unclear. Would depend on location.	Unclear. Would depend on location.	Unclear. Would depend on location.	Unclear. Increased emissions may be offset by shifting of impact away from Old Town.	Unclear. Would depend on location.
Parking	Explore establishment of <u>additional long-term/overnight parking</u> peripheral to Old Town.	Long-term parking for multiple buses exists at the Masonic Memorial. **New since 2005.	X		Medium. Questionable benefits without driver amenities. Locations exist but SS.	Positive, particularly if driver amenities are included.	Positive, as long as impacts are shifted from Old Town.	Positive if additional long-term parking increases visitation to City.	Positive if service is improved.	Unclear. Possibly reduced emissions but concentration near site and along routes. Some shifting of impacts.	Unclear. Would depend on site.
Parking/ Drop-Off	<u>Assess operation of existing loading and unloading areas.</u> Options include reducing #, increasing # or dispersing parking to other areas in Old Town.	Six designated areas in Old Town comprising 10+ spaces. The areas are: - Waterfront/Unit Block of King Street/The Strand - Market Square - Gadsby's Tavern - Christ Church - The Lyceum - Friendship Firehouse **Changes to Unit Block of King in 2008.	X		High. Necessary to address site-specific traffic congestion. Few options exist in Old Town east of Washington Street.	An increase would be positive to reduce queue time and need to circle in search of drop-off locations.	Unclear. Additional loading/drop-off may increase bus traffic but could prevent unauthorized drop-off and congestion.	Unclear. Added visitors is positive, however additional drop-off may negatively impact parking.	Positive in that faster, improved service would reduce time in bus. A reduction or dispersal may be negative.	Reducing the number of drop-off areas may adversely affect environment by increasing emissions due to queuing, frequent vehicle starts/stops.	Increasing or dispersing the # of drop-off areas could negatively affect parking. Reducing drop-off areas would add more spots into the existing parking supply.
Parking	Study feasibility and alternatives for locating a <u>designated parking/visitor facility</u> in the City.	No such facility currently exists. The 2005 Task Force called for a similar study but none was implemented. **No changes since 2005.		X	Medium. Locations exist but may prove costly to accommodate projected use.	Strongly positive if driver amenities are included.	Positive if impacts to Old Town are minimized through development of alternate distribution strategies.	Positive if bus accommodations are provided.	Positive for those who plan longer stays; negative for drive-through visitors.	Neutral positive. Infrastructure and emissions reduced in Old Town but concentrated near facility.	Neutral positive. Public parking supply could be expected to expand.
Designated Routes/ Directional Signage	Explore whether to post <u>wayfinding signage</u> directing motorcoaches to: - Loading & unloading areas - Short-term parking - Long-term parking	A variety of wayfinding signs are currently in place. There are no wayfinding signs specific to motorcoaches. The City's existing Wayfinding Initiative is developing comprehensive signage system to include vehicular and potentially motorcoach signs. **No changes since 2005.	X	X	Medium. Signage needed but may negatively impact certain streets, particularly if these streets are already congested.	Positive in that it provides clear directions; restrictions may be negative.	Unclear. Primary impact would be borne by citizens on wayfinding routes.	Neutral positive; better signage may improve visitation near designated areas.	Positive by reducing time spent in buses.	Neutral. May reduce emissions but could negatively impact infrastructure on designated routes.	Neutral; would depend on whether parking or drop-off areas are impacted.
Comm & Management	Consider whether to fund and implement a <u>motorcoach counting plan</u> to improve the current data on motorcoach use in Alexandria.	Counts on motorcoach use in Alexandria are available from select carriers and destinations. However, the City has not performed specific counts. **No changes since 2005.	X		High. TBES staff estimates \$10,000 for study depending on deliverables.	Neutral.	Positive, provides accurate figures with respect to visitation.	Positive, provides accurate figures with respect to visitation.	Neutral.	Neutral.	Neutral.

MOTORCOACH TASK FORCE ISSUES MATRIX

GENERAL CATEGORY	ISSUE	CURRENT SITUATION/CHANGES SINCE 2005	SHORT TERM	LONG TERM	FEASIBILITY	IMPACTS ON:					Public Parking Supply
						Bus Operators	Citizens	Business	Visitors	Environment	
Comm & Management	Explore whether the City should implement a communications plan for motorcoach touring.	Currently, industry outreach is primarily conducted by the ACVA. A link for motorcoach information on the City website is re-directed to the ACVA site, which includes text and maps files in PDF. **Charges since 2005 include ACVA brochure and website.	X		High. City communications team is involved. Some technical challenges exist and expenses are undetermined.	Positive, added information (signs, website, telephone helpline) is helpful.	Neutral, so long as impact on residents is less.	Positive.	Positive.	Neutral, though added visitation may impact infrastructure and cause added emissions.	Neutral.
Comm & Management	Consider the creation of a tourism management division to serve as a liaison between the tourism industry and the city's residents	No such division or department currently exists within City government. ** No changes since 2005.	X		Unclear. Input from City Manager's office and Council needed.	Neutral, positive in that a centralized location for information would be beneficial.	Neutral, positive so long as interests are represented by division.	Positive so long as such a division improves visitor's stay.	Neutral.	Neutral.	Neutral, positive, as long as coordination with existing agencies is maintained.
Enforcement	Consider increased Police presence and enforcement of existing city ordinances and traffic laws pertaining to motorcoaches.	APD (King Street Detail) provides weekend traffic detail on unit block of King Street. APD steps up enforcement seasonally. **Unit Block detail new 2008.	X		High. APD has worked closely with Task Force and is committed to continued support.	Neutral in that operators will need time to adjust.	Positive in that added enforcement may address repeated concerns.	Neutral, so long as visitation is not negatively impacted.	Neutral.	Neutral.	Positive.
Regulation/Code	Explore whether to pursue authority to enact a comprehensive tourism ordinance to help manage daily tourism operations within the City.	The City's current ordinances and regulations regarding motorcoach and sight-seeing buses are in Title 9, Chapter 12, Article B, Division 2 of the City Code. These cover: - Establishment/withdrawal of rights for designated parking spaces - Use of locations other than those designated - Penalties ** No changes have been made since 2005.	X		Medium. Task Force must come to consensus on many issues.	Neutral, if clear ordinances will greatly clarify operations; new regulations may be highly negative.	Neutral, positive, new regulations will likely provide more regulatory authority to City.	Neutral, if clear ordinances will greatly clarify operations; new regulations may also negatively impact tourism.	Neutral, visitor experience must be maintained.	Neutral positive. Regulations would seek to balance environmental impact with business interests needs.	Neutral, depending on the outline of such an ordinance.

ISSUE #1: Lack of designated routes puts coaches on sensitive streets/safety (short-term)

The question of “designated routes” proved the most difficult for the group to define, debate, and ultimately reach consensus on.

While agreeing conceptually that a network of signed routes is required to convey information to motorcoaches, the Task Force did not agree on specific routes and – moreover – several members of the Task Force continue to object to any routes at all within Old Town east of Washington Street. The Task Force considered whether to designate routes for the spring 2009 peak season, but ultimately decided to leave a final decision on routes as a long-term consideration and one that would rely on a system of “managed dispersal” for buses. The Task Force emphasized that any future system of managed dispersal would require access for motorcoaches in a manner that disperses their impacts across the street grid, limits impacts from certain types of trips – particularly touring buses – and includes a fee-based registration system which would be codified as soon as 2011.

The Task Force ultimately concluded that a system of managed dispersal is preferable to dedicated routes and this report includes no recommendations on routes.

The Task Force also emphasized that designation of motorcoach “routes” should not unfairly concentrate bus traffic on certain streets. It emphasized that any future routes must be packaged with other significant policy changes – particularly acquisition of regulatory authority to legally regulated motorcoaches, limitations on certain types of motorcoach trips and a fee-based, registration system.

Motorcoach Task Force Map



GIS “dynamic map” tool.

In meetings beginning on October 27, 2008, the Task Force used a specially designed dynamic mapping process (left) designed by the City’s Geographic Information System staff to review streets in Old Town.

The criteria used by the Task Force for consideration of motorcoach routes included the following:

- Functional Classification (class of roads that the road belongs to – most typically arterial, collector, or local)
- Adjacent Land Use (8 different including residential, commercial, industrial, etc...)
- Street Width (curb-to-curb pavement width, which includes on-street parking)
- Right-of-Way width and Building-to-Building width (width of the city’s right-of-way and distance between buildings on the street, which provides some sense of enclosure)
- Turning Radius (how “tight” are the turns for motorcoaches)

- Presence of Parking or Blind Spots
- Presence of Turning Restrictions
- Presence of “One-Way” designation
- Presence of Landmarks/Attractions (the road provide direct access to attractions)
- “Walksheds” & Activity Centers (whether the road provided access to numerous attractions within a reasonable walking distance)
- Existing Transit Route (streets used by the King Street Trolley, DASH, or MetroBus)
- Access to Commercial Interests & Existing Parking (street provides direct access)

Each of these criteria were entered into the GIS system and presented via web browser to the entire Task Force so the group could review the many different on-the-street variables at one time. The process, for instance, enabled the group to start its review with simple criteria such as street width or presence of “attractions.” As additional questions arose (i.e. “How many residents live on this street? Or, “Is this street already used by DASH buses?”) staff was able to layer this additional data onto the map – dynamically switching the different “layers” on or off for ease of viewing.

The Task Force also used its September 22 field trip aboard a motorcoach to identify other potential issues of concern. The notes from this field trip and a summary of the trip findings itself are included in the Appendix but the group primarily used the motorcoach trip to drive potential bus routes, note difficult on-the-ground conditions and review potential parking locations including Jamison Avenue and Washington Street. The group briefly drove a route used by touring motorcoaches.

A chart summarizing the established criteria for all the streets in Old Town considered by the Task Force – including general notes from the Task Force motorcoach trip on September 22 – is on the following page:

MOTORCOACH STREET SUMMARY – PAGE 1

Street	Functional Classification	Right-of-Way Width	Curb-to-Curb Width	Build-to-Build Width	On-Street Parking	Curb Radius	One Way	Adjacent Land Use	Access to Landmarks	Transit or Trolley	Parking Access	Turn Restrict.	Notes
Washington	Arterial	88' to 100'	50'-70'	88' to 100'+	Yes/Non HOV	15-25'	No	All (Commercial)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	R to Duke difficult No turns at King No L to Pend. 4-6pm
Madison	Primary Collector	66'	36'-42'	66' to 132'+	Yes	15-25'	Yes	Comm, Residential	No	Yes	No	No	R to Fairfax difficult
Pendleton	Primary Collector	66'	36'-42'	70'-78'+	Yes	15-25'	No	Comm, Res, Public	No	Yes	No	No	R onto Royal difficult
Royal	Local	66'	36'-40'	66'+	Yes	15-25'	No	Resid., Public, Comm	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	R to King difficult
Fairfax	Res. Collector	66'	36' to 40'	66'+	Yes	15-25'	No	Comm, Res, Pub (Prim. Res S/King)	Yes	Yes (N of Prince)	No	No	L onto King difficult
Union	Local	50'	28'-34'	50'	Yes	15-25'	No	Res, Park, Comm	Yes	Trolley only	Yes	No	
Strand	Local	30'	22'-28'	33' to ++	Yes	15'-25'	No	Comm, Park	No	Trolley only	Yes	No	
Prince	Local Res. Collector (1 blk)	66'	40'	64'	Yes	15-25'	No	Comm, Res	No	Trolley only	Yes	No	R to Union difficult Cobblestone blk
King	Primary Collector	66'	24'-48'	66'+	Yes	15-25'	No	Comm, Res	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
Duke	Arterial (to Rte 1) Res. Collector (E of Rte 1)	66'	36'-40'	66'+	Yes	15-25'	No	Residential, Comm	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
Franklin	Arterial Res. Collector (E of Washington)	100'	40'-44'	100'-115'+	Yes	15-25'	Yes	Residential, Comm	No	Yes (W of Royal)	No	No	
Lee	Local	50'	26' to 36'	50'+	Yes	15-25'	No	Res, Comm	Yes	No	No	No	
St. Asaph	Local	66'	36' to 42'	66'+	Yes	15-25'	No	Res, Comm	No	No	No	No	

MOTORCOACH STREET SUMMARY – PAGE 2

Street	Functional Classification	Right-of-Way Width	Curb-to-Curb Width	Build-to-Build Width	On-Street Parking	Curb Radius	One Way	Adjacent Land Use	Access to Landmarks	Transit or Trolley	Parking Access	Turn Restrict.	Notes
Bashford	Primary Collector	50' to 60'	24'-36'	106'-150'+	Yes	15-25'	No	Residential	No	Yes (Pitt-Wash)	No	Yes	
Second	Local	66'	26'-56'	66'-86'+	Yes	15-25'	No	All (Comm)	No	Yes (1 blk) (Ffx-Royal)	No	Yes	No access s'bound from Pkwy
First	Res Coll (1 blk) Local	66'	20'-40'	65'-85'	Yes	15-25'	No	Comm, Indust	No	No	No	No	Hotel access
Montgomery	Primary Collector	66'	34'-40'	66'-130'	Yes	15-25'	Yes	Comm, Indust, Park	No	Yes (West of Ffx)	No	Yes	No L from Wash.
Wythe	Primary Collector	66'	36'-40'	66'-110'	Yes	15-25'	No	Res, Comm	No	Yes (1 blk) (Ffx-Royal)	No	No	
Oronoco	Residential Collector	66'	36'-40'	69'-100'	Yes	15-25'	No	Public, Resid	Yes	No	No	No	
Princess	Local	66'	36'-40'	69'-80'	Yes	15-25'	No	Resid, Public	No	No	No	No	Cobblestone (1 blk)
Queen	Local	66'	36'-40'	62'-80'	Yes	15-25'	No	Residential	No	No	No	No	
Cameron	Res Coll (1 blk) Local	66'	36'-40'	62'-100'	Yes	15-25'	W of Wash	Resid, Comm	Yes	Yes (1 blk) (Ffx-Royal)	Yes	No	
Wolfe	Local	66'	30'-40'	62'-100'	Yes	15-25'	No	Resid, School	No	No	No	No	
Wilkes	Local	66'	36'-40'	62'-100'	Yes	15-25'	No	Resid, School Comm, Vacant	No	No	No	No	Wilkes St Tunnel
Gibbon	Local	66'	36'-40'	68'-200'	Yes	15-25'	W of Wash	School, Resid Comm	No	Yes (W of Royal)	No	No	
Jefferson	Local	66'	36'-80'	84'-120'	Yes	15-25'	No	Residential	No	Yes (1 blk)	No	No	
Green	Local	66'	36'-56'	106'-160'+	Yes	15-25'	No	Resid, School	No	No	No	No	
Pitt	Local	66'	34' to 50'	66'+	Yes	15-25'	No	Res, Comm	Yes	No	No	No	

After considering all Old Town streets, the Task Force ultimately determined that a system of managed dispersal – if adopted – would be contingent on a well-managed, fee-based registration and permitting system designed to accommodate four primary trip types that motorcoaches take in Alexandria:

1. All buses bound for hotels, parking/loading/unloading in Alexandria with reservations. This is primarily a *transportation* trip.
2. All buses bound for hotels, parking/loading/unloading in Alexandria without reservations. This is primarily a *transportation* trip.
3. Sightseeing buses with an Alexandria-based “step-on” guide. These buses may be scheduled locally or by a regional provider to make a sightseeing tour of Alexandria. This is primarily a *touring* trip.
4. Sightseeing buses with no guide: These buses are typically scheduled by regional tour providers and often do not stop in Alexandria, preferring only to tour Old Town for sightseeing. This is primarily a *touring* trip.

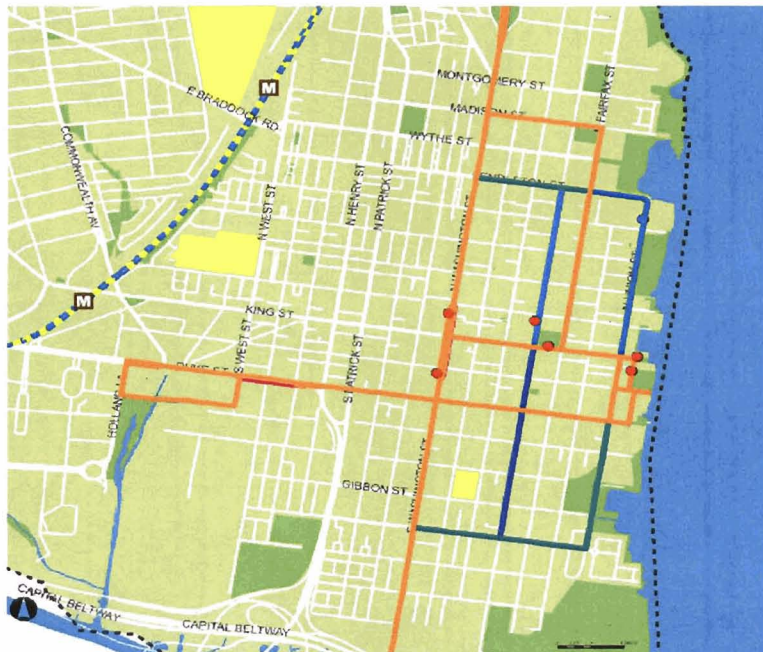
The system of managed dispersal assumes that the City will ultimately assume responsibility for developing a fee structure that does not unfairly impact local touring companies, implements some time restrictions (For instance, “No buses allowed in Old Town between 8 pm and 8 am unless for drop-off or pickup at hotels”) and that buses would display a registration sheet in their windows, for easy viewing by the Police.

A system – though centrally coordinated by the City – must be user-friendly for easy registration and access by authorized partners at local hotels, restaurants and destinations.

The following routes were considered, based upon the criteria listed in the spread sheet, to have the greatest potential as possible designated routes:

- Washington Street
- Patrick Street (Route 1)
- Henry Street (Route 1)

The Task Force also considered five (5) east-west routes for motorcoaches seeking to access unloading/loading and/or short-term parking east of Washington Street. The only short-term recommendation from this process included the designation of the unit block of King Street as one-way westbound permanently. The Task Force also considered – but did not agree – on whether King Street could serve as a primary egress route for all motorcoaches and a primary after-hours route. The east-west routes considered by the Task Force included:



The primary streets considered by the Task Force. The graphic in no way represents a recommended route system.

- Madison Street
- Pendleton Street
- King Street
- Duke Street
- Franklin Street

Finally, the Task Force also considered certain streets east of Washington Street that could provide north-south access to unloading/loading and short-term parking. These streets included:

- The Strand
- Union Street
- Fairfax Street
- Royal Street

ISSUE #2: Lack of short term & overnight parking (short-term and long-term)

To address the issue of short-term parking, the Task Force proposes to designate the south side of Jamieson Avenue between Holland Lane and South West Street as short-term (2- or 3-hour) motorcoach parking between 8 am and 8 pm. The entire section of Jamieson (currently 36 vehicular spaces) would be designated solely for motorcoach parking between March and Jun. However, during off-peak months (July through February) the City could monitor the parking and reintroduce vehicular parking.

This proposal received nearly unanimous support from Task Force members who expressed concern about the lack of existing short-term (2-hour) motorcoach parking. At present, two locations for short-term parking exist: There is space for four-to-five buses (250 feet) on the east side of the 500 block of North Union Street beside Robinson Terminal. An additional three spaces of free, unreserved short-term motorcoach parking spaces also exist on the 900 block of N. St. Asaph Street between Montgomery and First streets. The spaces are signed for tour bus parking but there are no existing time constraints or regulations in place.

The Task Force believes that by introducing new short-term parking, it may reduce the number of motorcoaches trolling through the City looking for a layover location.

ISSUE #3: Enforcement (short-term and long-term)

The Task Force initially proposes to instruct the Alexandria Police Department to more aggressively enforce existing city ordinances with respect to motorcoach traffic (as outlined in Sec. 9-12-160 through Sec. 9-12-165 of the City of Alexandria Code) and collect/report data related to motorcoach violations. Current City of Alexandria Code provides \$100 fines for violations of traffic infractions related to idling (§9-12-164), loading/unloading in spaces that are not designated by the City (§9-12-162) and parking longer than posted (§9-12-164). Beginning in March 2009, the APD plans to increase enforcement of violations associated with sightseeing buses and will make regular reports to the proposed standing committee. In the long-term, increased fines may encourage better compliance by motorcoach operators.

The City's initial program will be voluntary and require cooperation from industry partners. However, the Task Force determined that the City must ultimately amend the Code of Virginia to acquire regulatory authority to restrict operation of non-scheduled buses to specific streets and/or issue permits. Amendments to the state code should be recommended for inclusion in the City's legislative package within 1-3 years. Industry representatives will be included in the development of legislative proposals and are expected to join the City in seeking regulatory authority for motorcoach management.

The Task Force sought input from many sources to institute a collaborative approach to motorcoach management that addresses the operational needs of the industry with measures to limit intrusive effects on Alexandria's neighborhoods, historic resources, the environment, quality of life, traffic and parking. A voluntary system is a desirable first step, but regulatory authority will be necessary for long-term compliance.

Finally, the Task Force proposes that City Council should continue to support funding the Alexandria Police Department in its motorcoach management efforts in the Unit Block of King Street. (two officers on Friday and Saturday nights) The Alexandria Police Department currently provides two officers on Friday and Saturday night to monitor motorcoach traffic and ensure safe, efficient traffic flow.

ISSUE #4: Loading and Unloading (short-term)

The issue of loading and unloading proved inseparable from that of designated routes. The Task Force determined that all designated routes must provide access to the established loading and unloading areas. Conversely, new unloading/loading areas were undesirable because of the need to designate new routes to those areas. However, the Task Force arrived at one key recommendation: Designating additional 30-minute unloading/loading spaces in the 100 blocks of North and South Washington Street for both northbound and southbound buses during peak season.

The Task Force recognizes that any system of motorcoach management which will encourage voluntary registration for motorcoaches traveling east of Washington Street must also provide improved accommodations for so-called "pass-through" motorcoaches. This motorcoach trip type is common in the Washington, DC metropolitan area and is aimed at coaches making quick "through" trips of Alexandria bound to other destination such as George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate or the National Mall. It is assumed that many of these coaches may make only a short stop in Alexandria for shopping/refreshments or, worse, no stop at all – choosing instead to make detours through the Old & Historic District.

Task Force members were concerned about the routes used by both sightseeing tours with Alexandria-based



step-on guides and “pass-through” buses with no Alexandria guide. Since the sightseeing tours with step-on guides are manageable through a proposed registration system – and thus unloading and loading areas may be controlled – it was believe that the new 15-minute unloading/loading on Washington Street would serve as a spillover location during peak season and an outlet for pass-through motorcoaches.

The Task Force also determined that incremental short-term changes were sorely needed including new and updated signage for bus operators at each existing unloading/loading and short-term parking location. The current signs are outdated and difficult to read. Eventually, signs from the City’s wayfinding may be incorporated into the motorcoach management system

ISSUE #5: Education/Communications (short-term and long-term)

The Task Force determined that a combination of electronic, print, and broadcast tools – augmented with media relations and other professional services – would improve communications efforts related to motorcoach traffic. Additionally, the Task Force established that the City of Alexandria Office of Communications would be the primary conduit for communications to *residents, City employees, and the media* about City policies regarding operation of motorcoaches. The Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association (ACVA) will be the primary conduit for communications to *visitors, industry and business*.

Pending approval of the short-term recommendations, the City and ACVA plan to coordinate targeted short-term communications improvements to be in place by March 2009. Specific action items will include outreach to the touring industry and drivers, professional redesign and printing of brochures, interactive mapping efforts (2010 or later) and motorcoach media placement in independent print and electronic trade media not affiliated with trade associations.

The primary City efforts will include efforts to keep residents informed about new motorcoach-related developments and policies, help City staff to become familiar with and knowledgeable about motorcoach policies and procedures and promote motorcoach-related resources and policies for Alexandria residents. The City’s efforts will focus on the City Web Site (alexandriava.gov) and include Web Boxes, Special Web Features and Video/Audio Podcasts. An electronic message service (eNews) also reaches over 3,000 City residents and may include a specific motorcoach news category.

Articles are planned in early 2009 in FYI *Alexandria* (resident newsletter, circulation 69,000+); *CityNews* (employee newspaper, circulation approximately 3,000) supported by press releases and potentially paid



advertising in local newspapers. The City will also utilize the City of Alexandria Cable Channel 70 and Mayor Euille's program to broadcast motorcoach news.

The ACVA plans to enhance its current communication activities and develop a public relations plan to include the following short term and on-going activities:

Enhancement of current print and electronic communication tools:

- www.visitalexandriava.com – new site launched in November 2008
- Development of *Driver Information Micro Site* to include: Rules & Regulations, enforcement, interactive mapping tool, directions from north and south, where to eat/stay

Educate local and regional businesses to insure effective motorcoach management

- Alexandria constituent groups working with the motorcoach industry for leisure and corporate related groups to include hotels, restaurants, cultural and historic sites, tourist attractions and service providers, etc; regional Destination Management Companies (DMOs) working with our businesses
- Provide information and tools to disseminate to clientele when booking group business: Motorcoach Task Force Guidelines, revised Motorcoach brochure (print and electronic), requested link on business website to visitalexandriava.com and required informational verbiage for client contracts and agreements
- Communicate findings and educate constituents through the ACVA Tourism Marketing Forum, hotel sales meetings, personal meetings with appropriate businesses and Old Town Business & Professional Association

Develop media and public relations schedule to reach the following:

- Trade Association media – enhance current ACVA list of media (print and electronic) to reach the tour industry through communications with the primary trade associations to include: United Motorcoach Association: *The Intelligence* (monthly e-newsletter); *Bus & Motorcoach News* (bi-monthly newsletter), email and fax alerts on UMA.org
- American Bus Association: *Buses.org/Operator Trip Planning*, *ABA In the News*, *ABA Insider*; National Tour Association: NTAOnline.com, *Courier Magazine*, The Guild of Professional Tour Guides of Washington D.C. and

Attendance at appropriate tour and travel tradeshows to include: American Bus Association 2009 – 2010, United Motorcoach Expo (tentative); partner representation at individual shows.



V. Short-Term Recommendations

This section includes an overview of the Task Force short-term recommendations slightly reformatted to maintain consistency with the City Council memo. (In order to clarify the recommendations for Council approval, City Staff broke the initial seven (7) recommendations into ten (10) – each a separate actionable item by Council and organized for receipt by Council.) The recommendations are followed by a summary table and detailed discussion of each. The recommendations reflect the findings in the attached report:

1. Approve the concept of voluntary on-line motorcoach registration, and request staff to create, for future Council consideration, such a registration system including fees and daily limitations on certain types of motorcoach trips for implementation by March 2010,
2. To create the on-line registration system, allocate \$25,000 from Council's FY 2009 Contingent Reserve,
3. Request staff to conduct counts of motorcoach operations in 2009.
4. Request that the City Manager reconvene the Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force as currently constituted to review long-term motorcoach management strategies,
5. Provide quarterly motorcoach updates to the Task Force and to Council, including progress reports on motorcoach counts, development of walking tours and a registration system,
6. Request that the Police Department more aggressively enforce existing City ordinances with respect to motorcoach traffic and parking, and request that the Police Department collect and report data on motorcoach enforcement activity,
7. Request that the Police Department continue its transportation management efforts on the unit block of King Street,
8. Permanently designate the unit block of King Street one-way westbound to allow for safer traffic flow and provide better transportation management,
9. Designate the south side of Jamieson Avenue between Holland Lane and South West Street as short-term (2-hour) motorcoach parking between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Spaces on Jamieson Avenue will provide new short-term motorcoach parking in addition to existing short-term parking on North Union Street at Robinson Terminal and on the 900 block of North St. Asaph Street,
10. Designate new 30-minute motorcoach parking spaces in the following locations:
 - a. Two spaces at 112-118 North Washington Street,
 - b. Two spaces at 110-112 South Washington Street.

DETAILED SUMMARY OF MOTORCOACH TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

PRIMARY TF ISSUE	EXISTING REGULATION	TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION
General Motorcoach Management	No existing management structure	Approve the concept of voluntary on-line motorcoach registration, and request staff to create, for future Council consideration, such a registration system including fees and daily limitations on certain types of motorcoach trips for implementation by March 2010
		To create the on-line registration system, allocate \$25,000 from Council's FY 2009 Contingent Reserve Request staff to conduct counts of motorcoach operations in 2009 Request that the City Manager reconvene the Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force as currently constituted to review long-term motorcoach management strategies Provide quarterly motorcoach updates to the Task Force and to Council
Designated Routes	Unit block of King Street temporarily one-way on Fri/Sat	Permanently designate the unit block of King Street one-way westbound to allow for safer traffic flow and provide better transportation management
	No routes for motorcoaches. Certain streets posted off-limits by gross vehicle weight/size.	No recommendation regarding routes.
Parking	Free, two-hour short-term parking for 4-5 buses (250 feet) on N Union St. & N. St. Asaph and Masonic Memorial	Designate the south side of Jamieson Avenue between Holland Lane and South West Street as short-term (2-hour) motorcoach parking between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Spaces on Jamieson Avenue will provide new short-term motorcoach parking in addition to existing short-term parking on North Union Street at Robinson Terminal and on the 900 block of North St. Asaph Street
	All buses staying for 24+ hours required to use long-term parking at the GW Masonic Memorial	No changes proposed to long-term parking.
Unloading/Loading	Loading/unloading is available in six locations on or east of Washington Street	Improve signage at existing designated areas
		Designate new 30-minute motorcoach parking spaces in the following locations: Two spaces at 112-118 North Washington Street, Two spaces at 110-112 South Washington Street
Enforcement	\$100 fines for violations of traffic infractions related to idling (§9-12-164), loading/unloading in spaces not designated by the City (§9-12-162) and parking longer than posted (§9-12-164), in addition to general traffic laws	Request that the Police Department more aggressively enforce existing City ordinances with respect to motorcoach traffic and parking, and request that the Police Department collect and report data on motorcoach enforcement activity
		Request that the Police Department continue its transportation management efforts on the unit block of King Street
Education/Communication	Primarily ACVA responsibility	City & ACVA partner on combination of electronic, print, and broadcast tools to improve communications efforts related to motorcoach traffic, and coordinate with Office of Historic Alexandria to develop walking tours
		If recommendations are approved, publish a new brochure and motorcoach map in 2009

DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Approve the concept of voluntary on-line motorcoach registration, and request staff to create, for future Council consideration, such a registration system including fees and daily limitations on certain types of motorcoach trips for implementation by March 2010.

Recommendation	#1
What is the problem?	There is no current management structure – voluntary or otherwise – in place to address motorcoach transportation.
What are the current regulations?	There are no existing regulations, in part because Alexandria does not have regulatory authority to manage motorcoach operations. Tour bus route signs exist on Lower King Street at Union Street to direct motorcoaches to unloading/loading on The Strand.
What is the Task Force proposal?	<p>A system of managed dispersal for certain trip types may distribute motorcoaches evenly onto Old Town streets.</p> <p>The Task Force will continue to review staff proposals and may ultimately recommend to Council by March 2010 a system that disperses the four primary trip types: (1) Motorcoaches with group reservations, (2) Motorcoaches without reservations (3) Sightseeing buses with step-on guides and (4) Pass-through motorcoaches.</p> <p>Buses may be dispersed onto streets in such a way that limits traffic on streets daily.</p> <p>The system will be managed by the City and will establish fees, provide remote access for authorized customers and allow for printing of permits. This user-friendly system will be intended to greatly enhance the visitor experience for motorcoaches and tour companies while providing the City with much-needed data on motorcoach visitation and travel patterns. The system will ultimately provide recommended routes for motorcoaches and establish limits on certain motorcoach trip types, notably sightseeing buses with step-on guides.</p> <p>Buses will be expected to prominently display registration on the windows for ease-of-enforcement by Police.</p>

2. To create the on-line registration system, allocate \$25,000 from Council's FY 2009 Contingent Reserve

Recommendation	#2
What is the problem?	Development of technological solutions to motorcoach registration will require staff to investigate system that can assist in fee collection, provide remote access for authorized customers (including local business and potentially motorcoach operators). A user-friendly system will be intended to improve the visitor experience, clarify expectation for motorcoach operators and tour companies.
What is the current system?	There is no current system in place.
What is the Task Force proposal?	The Task Force estimates that it will require approximately \$25,000 in FY2010 new city funding for development of an on-line registration system. If Council decides to fund recommendation #2 from contingent reserves, \$25,000 could be reallocated from part of the contingent account originally set aside for AEDP. These funds will not be needed for the originally designated purpose in FY 2009, but by using these funds, the carryover to help fund the overall FY 2010 City budget would be reduced by \$25,000.

3. Request staff to conduct counts of motorcoach operations in 2009.


Recommendation	#3
What is the problem?	Estimates of the number of motorcoaches that visit Alexandria vary widely and some system must be designed to accurately sample the motorcoaches that travel through, load/unload or park in Old Town
What are the current estimates?	Estimates of the number of coaches depend on the number of vehicles that visit Mount Vernon (up 145 per day) and a sample of four businesses that load/unload at Market Square.
What is the Task Force proposal?	<p>A major long-term goal will be to design and institute an on-line registration system that uses a fee-based system of managed dispersal for motorcoaches.</p> <p>In the interim (beginning spring 2009), the City will seek to conduct counts of motorcoach traffic in Alexandria on primary routes and at key unloading, loading & short-term parking areas. The City proposes to use human counters to conduct cordon counts of motorcoaches entering and exiting Old Town, and the number of coaches that park/load/unload at all existing designated locations.</p> <p>The immediate fiscal impact of this program will be \$25,000 to conduct traffic counts of motorcoaches during representative weeks in the peak season (March through June). This cost can be funded through the Dept. of Transportation & Environmental Services FY2009 non-personnel professional services budget. The work program includes a category for transportation studies that was intended to be a catch-all for this type of study.</p>

4. Request that the City Manager reconvene the Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force as currently constituted to review long-term motorcoach management strategies


5. Provide quarterly motorcoach updates to the Task Force and to Council, including progress reports on motorcoach counts, development of walking tours and the on-line registration system,

Recommendation	#4 and #5
What is the problem?	Other than the existing Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force, there is no City management structure or oversight authority in place to address motorcoach transportation. City Council, citizens and business interests need to work together to
What is the current situation?	To help the City address issues related to motorcoach transportation, the City Manager appointed an Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force in April 2008. This group was comprised of five residents, five business/industry representatives, one representative from Historic Alexandria and five staff/City Council members, including representatives from Transportation & Environmental Services and Police. As a collaborative effort the Task Force's goal was to develop a proactive approach to motorcoach management, which recognizes the economic value of the industry and balances the operational needs with measures to limit intrusive effects on Alexandria's neighborhoods, the environment, quality of life, traffic and parking. The Task Force reviewed best practices and sought to build consensus on measures that balance the multiple interests of the City.
What is the Task Force proposal?	The Task Force determined that the existing composition of residents, industry and staff interests is sufficiently balanced to address motorcoach management in Alexandria. Regular updates from staff are necessary to address progress toward the long-term goals and the Task Force should reconvene in the future when policy-level recommendations for management are needed. In the short-term, the Task Force will receive quarterly updates on the planned motorcoach counts, development of walking tours and the on-line registration system.


6. Request that the Police Department more aggressively enforce existing City ordinances with respect to motorcoach traffic and parking, and request that the Police Department collect and report data on motorcoach enforcement activity,

Recommendation	#6
<p>What is the problem?</p>	<p>Motorcoach operators commonly allow passengers to unload or load in undesignated locations and allow buses to idle for too long. The current City Code with respect to idling is contradictory with citations (and on-street signs) that say “No Idling” pursuant to Sec. 9-12-164 although Virginia Administrative Code 9 VAC5-40-5670 and Title 11, Chapter 1 of the City of Alexandria Code prohibit tour bus idling for more than 10 minutes in commercial and residential areas. This needs to be corrected and clarified.</p> 
<p>What are the current regulations?</p>	<p>City of Alexandria Code provides \$100 fines for violations of traffic infractions related to idling (§9-12-164), loading/unloading in spaces that are not designated by the City (§9-12-162) and parking longer than posted (§9-12-164).</p>
<p>What is the Task Force proposal?</p>	<p>Beginning in March 2009, the APD plans to increase enforcement of violations associated with sightseeing buses and will make regular reports to the proposed standing committee. In the long-term, increased fines may encourage better compliance by motorcoach operators.</p>

7. Request that the Police Department continue its transportation management efforts on the unit block of King Street.

Recommendation	#7
What is the problem?	Coordinating vehicular, pedestrian and motorcoach traffic on lower King Street is challenging on weekends, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights. The intersection of King and Union streets, as well as traffic on The Strand is often gridlocked due to heavy use.
What are the current regulations?	The Alexandria Police Department currently provides two officers on Friday and Saturday night to monitor motorcoach traffic and ensure safe, efficient traffic flow. This arrangement was created, in part, in response to the National Harbor Collaborative
What is the Task Force proposal?	<p>The Task Force proposes to maintain this operation for the foreseeable future during peak visitor season (March through June) to maintain safe and efficient traffic flow on King Street and Union Street (pictured below).</p>  <p>Recommendation #7 will require approximately \$80,000 annually to cover Alexandria Police Department overtime. In FY 2009, the City added \$80,000 to the Police Department's overtime budget for the National Harbor initiative, which supports transportation management in the Lower King Street area. To continue this effort in FY 2010 and beyond, the Police Department would need to have those funds budgeted annually.</p>


8. Permanently designate the unit block of King Street one-way westbound to allow for safer traffic flow and provide better transportation management.

Recommendation	#8
What is the problem?	Traffic – which is often particularly heavy on Friday and Saturday nights – causes severe congestion on lower King Street, particularly when motorcoaches are involved
What are the current regulations?	<p>The APD currently provides two officers on Friday and Saturday night to monitor motorcoach traffic and ensure safe, efficient traffic flow on lower King Street and temporarily convert the street to one-way. The unit block of King Street is currently signed to promote tour bus loading and unloading.</p> 
What is the Task Force proposal?	<p>Designating the unit block of King Street one-way westbound permanently will allow for safer, more effective traffic management, especially given the presence of the King Street Trolley and many pedestrians, motorists and bicyclists.</p> <p>Under this plan, King Street may serve as a primary egress route for motorcoaches and could also provide a primary after-hours route.</p>

9. Designate the south side of Jamieson Avenue between Holland Lane and South West Street as short-term (2 hour) motorcoach parking between the hours of 8 am and 8 pm. Spaces on Jamieson Avenue will provide new short-term motorcoach parking in addition to existing short-term parking on North Union Street at Robinson Terminal and on the 900 block of North St. Asaph Street.

Recommendation	#9
<p>What is the problem?</p>	<p>Short-term parking is currently limited to two locations, each of which has disadvantages. Currently, free, unreserved short-term motorcoach parking exists for four to five buses (250 feet) on the east side of the 500 block of North Union Street beside Robinson Terminal and for 2-3 buses on the 900 block of North St. Asaph Street. Buses may also pay \$10 to park temporarily at the Masonic Memorial. Neither location offers ample amenities for drivers.</p>
<p>What are the current regulations?</p>	<p>City code (§9-12-164) provides a \$100 fine for sightseeing buses that park for longer than the poster period.</p>
<p>What is the Task Force proposal?</p>	<p>The Task Force proposes new short-term parking on the south side of Jamieson Avenue between Holland Lane and South West Street.</p> <div data-bbox="781 1064 1133 1536" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>This parking would be limited in nature (2- to 3-hours) and be restricted to between 8 am and 8 pm. Parking would be primarily for motorcoaches during peak months (March through June) but during off-peak months (July through February) the City could monitor the location and reintroduce vehicular parking as needed.</p>

10. Designate new 30-minute motorcoach parking spaces in the following locations:
- a. Two spaces at 112-118 North Washington Street
 - b. Two spaces at 110-112 South Washington Street

Recommendation	#10
What is the problem?	Many buses make brief “pass-through” trips of Alexandria when en route between DC and Mount Vernon. A number of these buses provide only an extremely brief period of time for tourists to see the City, and some buses do not stop at all.
What are the current regulations?	None
What is the Task Force proposal?	<p>The Task Force is seeking to limit the negative impacts of “pass-through” buses without inadvertently harming potential visitors to Alexandria. By designating new unloading and loading spaces in the 100 block of North and South Washington Street, the Task Force hopes to encourage “pass-through” buses to remain on one of the City’s larger arterial streets while also providing an opportunity to drop-off passengers in a location that is convenient to access other modes of transportation, particularly the free King Street Trolley.</p>  <p>The unloading/loading area should be designated for 30-minutes only and should be strictly enforced by Police. It is possible for the City to designate these spaces seasonally – March through June. During off-peak season, the number of spaces may be smaller and/or regular vehicular spaces opened.</p>

VI. Appendix

A. Motorcoach Task Force: Legal Issues and Related Impacts on the Process for Motorcoach Management in the City of Alexandria

B. Meeting Minutes

APPENDIX A: Motorcoach Task Force

Legal Issues and Related Impacts on the Process for Motorcoach Management in the City of Alexandria

Existing federal and commonwealth laws add to the complexity of motorcoach management and directly affect both the process the City must follow to acquire legal authority to manage motorcoaches and potential future management strategies.

In seeking a more regulatory regime that recognizes the economic value of the industry and balances its operational needs with measures that limit the intrusive effects of motorcoaches, the Task Force has considered existing motorcoach trips and the legal framework.

Motorcoaches tend to visit Alexandria for two purposes: transportation and touring (aka, sightseeing). Furthermore, in the course of its work the City Manager's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force has identified four primary trip types that motorcoaches take in Alexandria:

1. All buses bound for hotels, parking/loading/unloading in Alexandria with reservations. This is primarily a *transportation* trip.
2. All buses bound for hotels, parking/loading/unloading in Alexandria without reservations. This is primarily a *transportation* trip.
3. Sightseeing buses with an Alexandria-based "step-on" guide. These buses may be scheduled locally or by a regional provider to make a sightseeing tour of Alexandria. This is primarily a *touring* trip.
4. Sightseeing buses with no guide: These buses are typically scheduled by regional tour providers and often do not stop in Alexandria, preferring only to tour Old Town for sightseeing. This is primarily a *touring* trip.

In its short-term recommendations, the Task Force is proposing an initial period of voluntary compliance and registration for all motorcoaches wishing to travel east of Washington Street. However, for this proposal to eventually carry force of law the City must consider legal implications in the US Code and the Code of Virginia. Additionally, certain sections of the City Code must also be changed.

US Code: Federal law exists to protect motorcoach and charter bus transportation from local regulation. Title 49, §14501 reads, as follows:

No State or political subdivision thereof and no interstate agency or other political agency of 2 or more States shall enact or enforce any law, rule, regulation, standard, or other provision having the force and effect of law relating to—

(A) scheduling of interstate or intrastate transportation (including discontinuance or reduction in the level of service) provided by a motor carrier of passengers subject to jurisdiction under subchapter I of chapter 135 of this title on an interstate route;

(B) the implementation of any change in the rates for such transportation or for any charter transportation except to the extent that notice, not in excess of 30 days, of changes in schedules may be required; or

(C) the authority to provide intrastate or interstate charter bus transportation.

This referenced section of the federal code prevents the City from enacting a mandatory fee solely on motorcoaches to enter the City; it likely also prevents requiring such buses to register with the City prior to entering the City, even if no fee is imposed. The federal code, however, does not prevent

Alexandria from regulating touring generally, or prevent the City from charging fees to tour, park in the right of way, or load or unload in the right of way. However, it is important to remember that the federal law issues are only one set of issues to be addressed; there are also independent state law issues, as set forth more fully below.

Code of Virginia: One particular section of the Code of Virginia most directly relates to the City's ability to regulate, if it chooses to do so, motorcoaches arriving in the City. Virginia Code §46.2-1304 reads as follows:

Local regulation of trucks and buses.

The governing bodies of counties, cities, and towns may by ordinance, whenever in their judgment conditions so require:

- 1. Prohibit the use of trucks, except for the purpose of receiving loads or making deliveries on certain designated streets under their jurisdiction;*
- 2. Restrict the use of trucks passing through the city or town to such street or streets under their jurisdiction as may be designated in such ordinance.*

The Cities of Poquoson and Williamsburg may restrict the operation of nonscheduled buses, other than school buses, over designated streets under its jurisdiction.

(Code 1950, § 46-206; 1958, c. 541, § 46.1-181; 1968, c. 463; 1989, c. 727; 1998, cc. 547, 574; 2007, c. 813.)

In the view of the City Attorney's office, this state code section prevents Alexandria from restricting the operation of motorcoaches in the City solely on the basis of them being motorcoaches. (this is not intended to suggest that the City cannot limit routes for all vehicles based on size, weight, height, etc – the issue is restricting motorcoaches because they are motorcoaches.) The City Attorney's office recommends that if City Council desires to restrict the operation of motorcoaches in the City, the City petition the General Assembly to get the same regulatory authority as the Cities of Williamsburg and Poquoson.

Additionally, Task Force members sought to clarify issues related to the length of vehicles generally (§46.2-1112) and whether local authorities may prescribe the weight, width, height or length of vehicles (§46.2-1104).

§46.2-1112 states that "No bus or motor home longer than 45 feet shall be operated on any highway in the Commonwealth." This is consistent with federal law. Additionally, §46.2-1104 reads:

The local authorities of counties, cities, and towns, where the highways are under their jurisdiction, may adopt regulations or pass ordinances decreasing the weight limits prescribed in this title for a total period of no more than 90 days in any calendar year, when an engineering study discloses that operation over such highways or streets by reason of deterioration, rain, snow, or other climatic conditions will seriously damage such highways unless such weights are reduced.

It has been noted by several Task Force members that the Code of Virginia conflicts with City of Alexandria code §10-6-3 regarding the Length of vehicles generally. The city code states that "No motor vehicle exceeding a length of 40 feet shall be operated upon a street of this city." It is the City Attorney's opinion that this City Code section, which was established in 1963 and most recently amended in 1979, was always intended to be consistent with the state code and was simply never amended to be consistent with the Code of Virginia when it was amended in 1993 to increase the

maximum allowed length of buses from 40 feet to 45 feet. In any event, state code makes it clear that local laws that are inconsistent with state code are not enforceable.

In the view of the City Attorney's office, any efforts to enact regulations applying exclusively to motorcoaches in any way – including route, weight, width, height, passenger capacity or length of motorcoaches allowed on specific City streets - can only take place after an express grant of such power from the General Assembly.

As previously discussed, the City could petition the General Assembly to amend §46.2-1304 regarding regulatory authority generally. Alternatively, or as a supplemental step, the City could request that the General Assembly amend the City charter to allow the City to undertake such regulation, notwithstanding the contrary provisions of state code that generally apply, like Va. Code §46.2-1101 (Maximum size and weight “Local authorities shall not alter”) and Va. Code §46.2-1112 (“Length of vehicles generally”). Any request for such authority should make it clear that the City is not seeking to limit the transportation function of charter buses, but the touring aspect only, so as not to run afoul of the federal law previously discussed herein. The proper approach to take on this will require input from the City's legislative director and his staff, as well as other resources with knowledge and insight regarding the General Assembly as then comprised.

Code of Alexandria: Task Force members have also requested an opinion from the City Attorney on whether the city's Zoning Ordinance – specifically ordinances related to residential housing – would necessitate a special use permit for touring. It seems as if the basis for the question is the notion that touring – driving either a guided or un-guided tour bus through the historic area of the City for the purpose of sightseeing – involves the transaction of commerce, and that as such, this “commercial” activity should not be allowed in those parts of the historic district that are zoned residential.

As a threshold matter, the Zoning Ordinance governs an owner's use of private real property, not to vehicular operations in the public right of way, so there is little applicability to motorcoach touring. Moreover, commercial activity takes place in residential properties all the time – home offices are specifically allowed by the Zoning Ordinance and many Alexandria residents conduct all sorts of business from their homes.

The one way in which the Zoning Ordinance could be used to limit tour bus traffic would be in the context of the approval of a special use permit for a newly developed destination for such bus traffic. For example, if a new hotel were to open in the City along the waterfront, as has been raised as a possibility by the owners of one of the waterfront parcels, the City could include in the SUP for the hotel terms that require the hotel to track the number of buses that are coming to the hotel and advise them prior to arrival to adhere to any properly adopted route restrictions, among other possible terms. This does not imply that the City could impose route restrictions through the zoning ordinance, but rather it could require the property owner to inform buses of any law the City passes that clears the current federal and state restrictions on local regulation.

TIMELINE, LEGAL & MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The Task Force seeks to outline a clear process for future motorcoach management strategies and acquisition of regulatory authority. The charts on the following pages outline the legal and operational processes for motorcoach management. The management proposal assumes that a legal framework is in place and has force of law.

2009

- March-June: Pending approval, count motorcoaches.
- March-June: Revise existing routes for step-on sightseeing tours used by Alexandria companies.
- March-June: Pending approvals, revise/reprint existing brochure and update existing website.
- November: Initial DRAFT of on-line registration/managed dispersal system available for review.

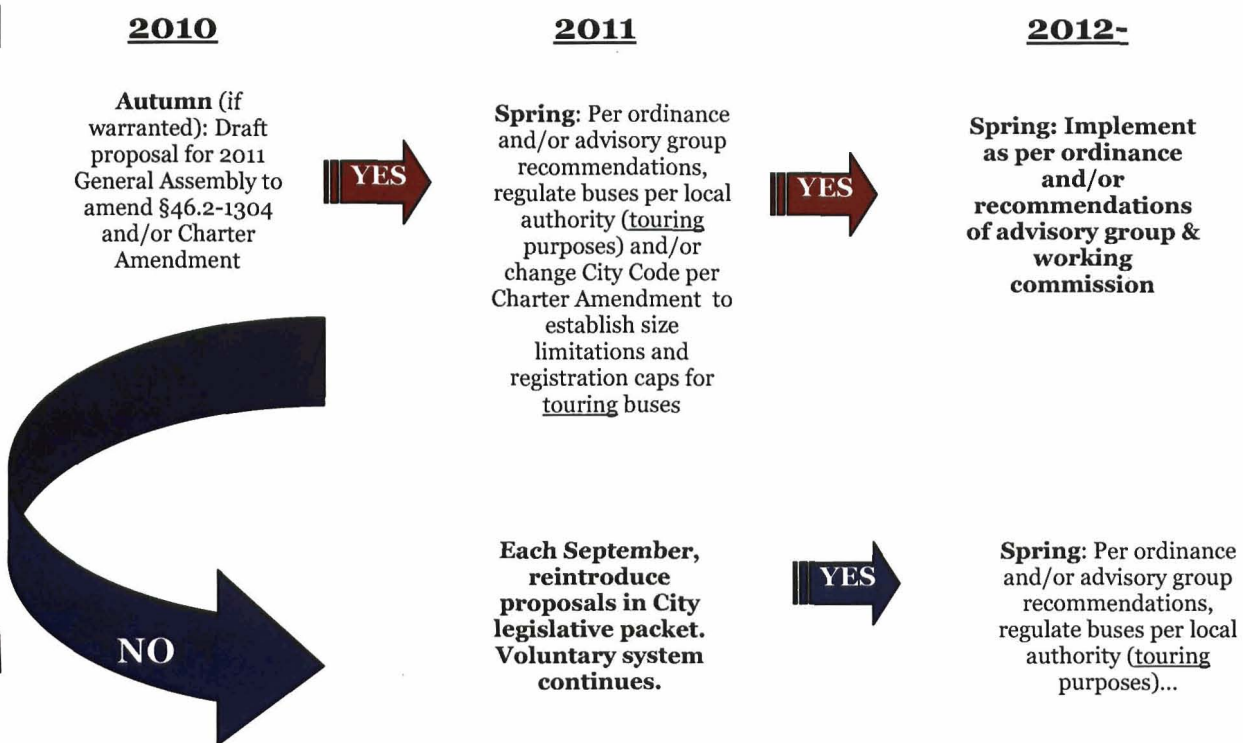
2010:

- March: Debut for on-line registration/managed dispersal system, voluntary fees.
- September: Review 1st season of system & routes with advisory/working group.
- September: Draft city proposal for the 2011 General Assembly to amend §46.2-1304 and/or the City Charter.

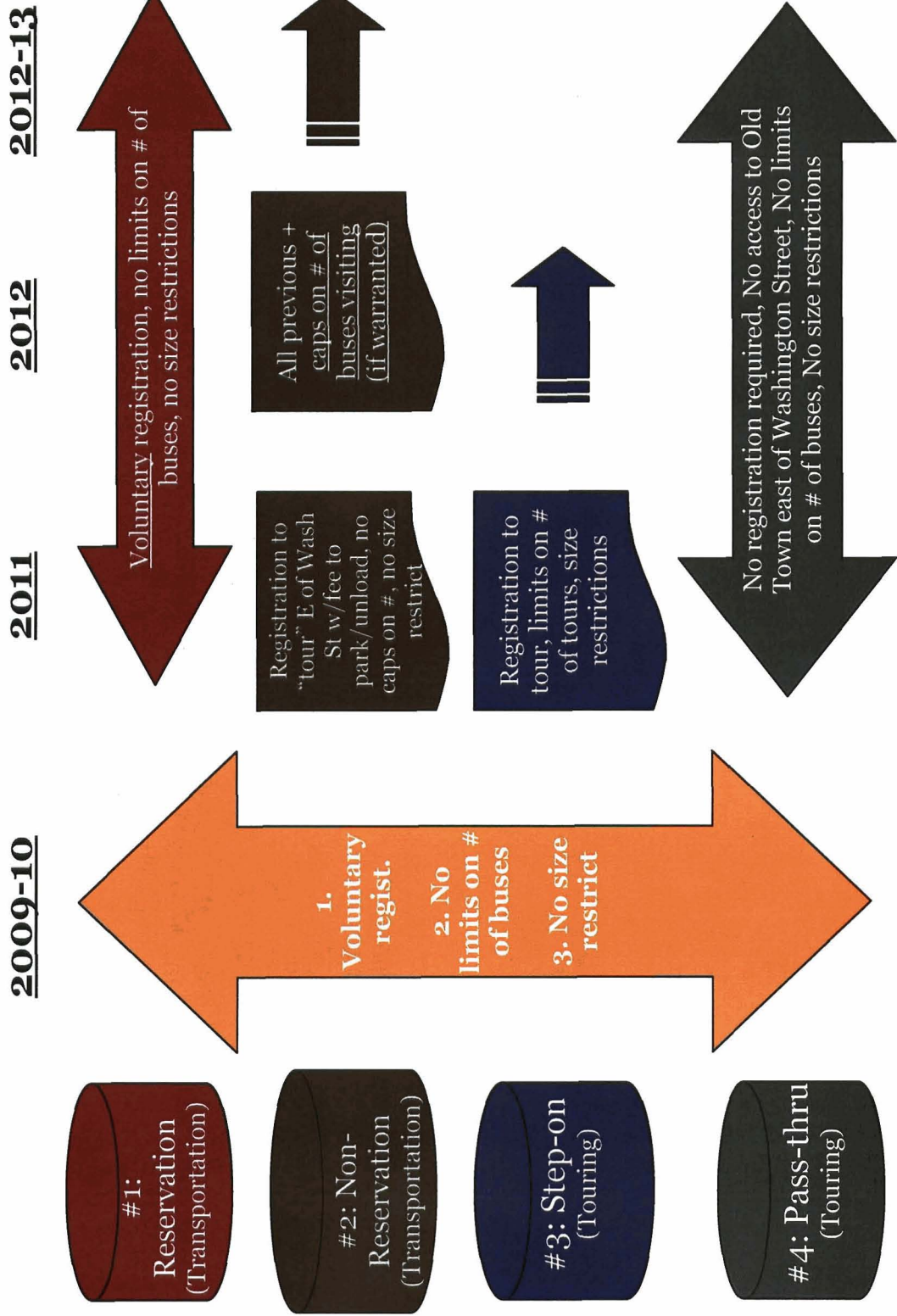
2011

- March-June: Implement touring and/or parking fees
- September: If §46.2-1304 is successfully revised and/or the charter is amended to allow the City regulate the route, size, length, etc. of motorcoaches on certain streets, then consider potential City Code changes to impose such restrictions.

Proposed Legal Process



Proposed Management Process



Appendix B

City of Alexandria Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

Meeting Minutes
19 May 2008
City Hall, Room 2000

Attendees

Task Force Members: Mayor William D. Euille, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Rob Aronson, Rich Baier (chair), David Baker, Bert Ely, Hubert Herre, Greg Ogden, Ellen Stanton, Sarita Schotta, Tara Zimnick-Calico, David Huchler (staff), Lorraine Lloyd (staff), Yon Lambert (staff).

Others: Councilman Rob Krupicka, Carolyn Dabney, Joanne Platt, Jerry Lepisko, Andrea Stowers, Carolyn Bell, Trish Klingemaier, Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 19 May 2008.

Executive Summary: This meeting began with introductions by all Task Force members. The primary meeting topics included proposed meeting schedule and timeframe for Task Force, a discussion of the Task Force charter and review of previous efforts related to motorcoaches in Alexandria. Meeting agendas and minutes will be available on the Task Force webpage at >> www.alexandriava.gov/motorcoach

The meeting began at 7 pm and concluded at 8:45 pm

1. Welcome & Introductions

The Task Force members introduced themselves and reviewed the notebooks and binder information presented to Task Force members.

2. Housekeeping Issues

- Chairman Baier outlined a proposed Task Force timetable which includes meeting twice monthly with the goal of providing recommendations to City Council in Fall 2008.
- Task Force members verbally consented to meeting on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month throughout the summer (August included).
- Task Force members consented to share contact information with each other in notebooks.
- Task Force members agreed that e-mail is the preferred mode of communication. A listserv may be established to allow members to communicate and share information across members. A website has been established so that Task Force members and the public may find additional information: www.alexandriava.gov/motorcoach

- Task Force members agreed that while public comment may be sought at designated times during meetings, comments and questions by citizens who attend meetings should be addressed at the end of regular meeting agendas.
- Chairman Baier asked members of the Task Force to be sure to exchange information with the groups each represents and to bring back input from their constituencies.
- Previous reports have been included in notebooks for information purposes only and additional items may be added to notebooks at any time.
- The Task Force members were encouraged to solicit input from other stakeholders who may be interviewed and information incorporated.
- Questions were raised regarding representation of businesses from Upper King Street and whether the Task Force would address issues related to the King Street Trolley. Chairman Baier explained that the Task Force would not address trolley issues and would focus on motorcoaches and tour buses only.
- Additionally, it was explained that the Old Town Business & Professional Association does seek to represent all businesses on King Street. Ms. Zimnick-Calico agreed to inform King Street businesses that the Motorcoach Task Force would address only motorcoach-related issues and would not address trolley related issues.

3. Items for Notebooks

Chairman Baier reviewed a handout for inclusion in members' notebooks that included the City Code related to motorcoach issues. There were questions related to whether the City has the power to regulate the physical size of buses. Chairman Baier explained that the City does regulate oversize and overweight trucks and can regulate according to vehicle size. It was agreed that the next meeting should feature a representative from the City Attorney's office who could speak to the regulatory framework.

Ms. Lloyd reviewed the ACVA publication "Motorcoach Rules & Regulations for Historic Alexandria, Virginia." The publication is somewhat inconsistent with operations that are currently taking place on The Strand and Prince Street, which is currently being used as a designated tour bus loading and unloading area. Buses will be allowed to load and unload on the 200 block of Prince Street and The Strand will be managed by the Alexandria Police Department which will be designated as one-way (westbound) on Fridays and Saturday evenings.

Mayor Euille explained that the Task Force would seek both short-term and long-term solutions for the challenges and opportunities presented by motorcoaches.

Councilman Smedberg voiced citizen concerns related to hotel vans and urged the Task Force to produce a document similar to "Motorcoach Rules & Regulations for Historic Alexandria, Virginia" issued by the City of Alexandria.

4. Charter

Upon review of the proposed charter and considerable discussion, the Task Force verbally consented to the following additions and changes:

Working collaboratively with multiple stakeholders, the Task Force will develop a proactive approach to motorcoach management that recognizes the economic value of the industry and balances its operational needs with measures to limit intrusive effects on Alexandria's neighborhoods, historic resources, the environment, quality of life, traffic and parking. The Task Force will review best practices and build consent on measures that balance multiple interests of the City ~~especially residents'~~ with regards to the public health, safety and welfare of the community. Ultimately, the Task Force will recommend a motorcoach management plan to City Council.

5. Review: Motorcoaches and Alexandria

The Task Force then reviewed two documents that were submitted for inclusion in the members' notebooks:

- ACVA Motorcoach Task Force Study (November 2005)
- Motorcoaches and Tourism Policy in Alexandria, Virginia (November 2007)

ACVA Motorcoach Task Force Study (November 2005)

Ms. Lloyd provided a review of this effort and its outcomes which include the currently established locations for loading and unloading as well as short-term and long-term parking. The previous report and task force efforts resulted in deadlocks on many key issues.

Motorcoaches and Tourism Policy in Alexandria, Virginia (November 2007)

Mr. Aronson provided a review of this document with efforts that originated during the previous task force. The documents includes a review of Task Force & Regulations, discussion of tourism planning efforts, costs of motorcoach tourism, motorcoach management reviews in other cities and recommendations for future management strategies.

Task Force members also reviewed a list of "Key Issues" as topics for future meetings. The issues and potential meeting topics include:

1. Code, Regulation & Legal Issues
2. Tourism Planning Strategies
3. Motorcoach Management in Other Cities (guest speakers)
4. Parking (Short-term & Long-term)
5. Designated Routes and/or Alternate Distribution Strategies
6. Communication & Wayfinding

Task Force members were specifically interested in the following additional actions to be arranged as soon as possible:

- Receiving a report outlining best practices and policies in other cities, with specific information detailing enforcement responsibilities
- Hearing from a representative of the City Attorney's office to discuss motorcoach regulations and the framework for additional regulations in the future
- Learning more from Williamsburg, Va., including the possibility of scheduling a guest speaker

- Bringing a representative from CSI to address the task force about tourism planning strategies

Staff also reviewed the City's current efforts regarding motorcoaches. The current short-term response includes Police presence on Friday and Saturday on the unit block of King Street and The Strand, one-way traffic direction on The Strand and in the unit-block of King Street, efforts to try new tactics for motorcoach management on The Strand and King Street and new enforcement - specifically ticketing - of motorcoach drivers.

Mayor Euille emphasized the City's intent to address issues related to motorcoaches quickly and - if necessary and/or desired by the Task Force - take short-term actions prior to acceptance of any report from the Task Force.

The Task Force adjourned at 8:45 pm

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

Meeting Minutes
9 June 2008
City Hall, Room 2000

Attendees

Task Force Members: Councilman Paul Smedberg, Rob Aronson, Rich Baier (chair), Stephanie Brown, Bert Ely, Charlotte Hall, Hubert Herre, Ellen Stanton, Sarita Schotta, Danielle Vendetti, Tara Zimnick-Calico, Bernard Caton (staff), David Huchler (staff), Lorraine Lloyd (staff), Chris Spera (staff), Cleveland Spruill (staff), Ryan Touhill (staff).

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 9 June 2008.

Executive Summary: The primary meeting topics included issues related to Motorcoach Regulation. The meeting began at 7 pm and concluded at 8:20 pm

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. Review Minutes

Mr. Baier reviewed meeting minutes for the May 19 meeting (emailed) and sought input on whether there were any amendments. Mr. Aronson offered an amendment to the minutes, under Section 4, with regards to the MCTF charter. Mr. Aronson requested the following changes:

The Task Force will review best practices and build consent on measures that balance multiple interests of the City ~~especially residents'~~ with regards to the public health, safety and welfare of the community.

Mr. Smedberg requested that the City Attorney's Office (Mr. Spera) research the City Code in order to learn if the Code contains a definition of a shuttle.

There being no further discussion, the amendment to the Charter was accepted and the May 19 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

3. New Information

Mr. Baier reminded the Task Force (TF) members to report back to their constituents in an effort to gain their feedback regarding the progress of the TF. Future meeting agendas will contain a time period when feedback from citizens, constituents and associations can be presented in an open forum regarding the motorcoach industry [motorcoach issues]. Concerns were raised including:

- Current regulations for bus loading/unloading of passengers (Mr. Herre)
- Additional citizen concerns regarding “drive-throughs” or “drive-bys” touring (Mr. Smedberg)
- Stretch limousines (Ms. Schotta)
- Problem definition and issues clarification for the TF, specifically the need for the TF to establish measurable goals (Ms. Brown)
- Need for quantitative analysis (Ms. Stanton)

4. Motorcoach Regulation

Mr. Spera made a presentation regarding motorcoach regulation to the TF. He noted that state code creates a window with regards to a localities ability to regulate motorcoaches. The city has broad power to regulate parking and routes of traffic within the City and it is Mr. Spera’s interpretation that the current limitations the City puts on motorcoaches with regards to parking and idling are within the City’s power. Restrictions on the route of certain vehicles (based on weight, height) also fall under the City’s power to regulate traffic. The unique challenge with regards to motorcoaches is whether or not motorcoaches can be regulated based on their status as touring vehicles as opposed to being based upon something measurable (i.e. height/weight of vehicle). There would be no challenge if the regulation of motorcoaches was based on size and was applied across the board. For example, the regulation would apply equally to motorcoaches as it would to MetroBus, DASH, etc. Regulations could be applied to parking, idling and route as long as the regulations are applied uniformly.

TF members raised questions regarding the definitions of “status” and “unscheduled buses,” haul routes, whether similar regulations in Williamsburg have been challenged and whether special regulation in Alexandria would be possible because residents live in the Historic Area.

Mr. Spera concluded by suggesting that the City’s initial step would be to initiate the legislative process to gain authority to regulate motorcoaches from the General Assembly.

Mr. Caton followed with an outline of the legislative process required to amend current state code or seek new laws aimed at motorcoach regulation. The process includes:

- A request made to all boards and commissions within the City for any legislative issues they would like to present to the General Assembly
- A meeting between the City Council’s Legislative Sub-Committee and the General Assembly delegation to informally discuss upcoming legislative issues The delegation provides comment and feedback to the City
- Development of a legislative package which includes the drafting of legislation
- A public meeting (usually in early November) on the legislative package
- A formal meeting between the City and General Assembly delegation is held. Some amendments or additions to the package may be made.
- City Council adopts the package.

Mr. Caton then works to have bills drafted and introduced in the General Assembly. The city must take into consideration the type of law it hopes to pass. The two choices include a General Law and a Charter Amendment.

General Laws require more work because they provide and opportunity for other cities and counties within the Commonwealth to be included in the law.

Charter Amendments are smaller [in terms of effort] but are generally watched closely by industry. For example, industries may worry that if one locality is provided an expressed authority to do something one year, then several other localities may seek the same authority during the next session.

The TF then reviewed a set of questions related to the regulation of motorcoaches developed by the Old Town Civic Association and presented by Mr. Ely.

The following major action items were developed after the presentations by Mr. Spera and Mr. Caton:

(1) Mr. Smedberg requested from Mr. Baier a summary of what the City has done in terms of education about motorcoach issues and how it is currently regulating it. Mr. Smedberg also requested that the TF develop a timeline for how TF meetings will proceed in the coming months. (Note: This list was presented at the initial meeting on May 19 and was included in the meeting minutes. It will be revised and presented at the June 23 meeting.)

(2) Mr. Ely suggested that the TF begin to draft language that could be later used by Mr. Caton when drafting legislation and that this process should be done over the summer in order to work within the legislative schedule.

(3) Mr. Smedberg requested that Mr. Baier develop a report on what the City has implemented since the last motorcoach task force was convened and a one-page grid reflecting these changes.

(4) Mr. Smedberg requested that Ms. Hall provide a business perspective to the TF that describes how businesses in Old Town rely on visitors from motorcoaches and executive coaches. Mr. Baier informed the group that this would be placed on the next meeting agenda.

(5) Mr. Baier reminded the group to email questions for future meetings to the group so that presenters can formulate their presentations.

The Task Force adjourned.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

**Meeting Minutes
23 June 2008
City Hall, Room 2000**

Attendees

Task Force Members: Councilman Paul Smedberg (chair), Rob Aronson, Chief David Baker, Stephanie Brown, Bert Ely, Charlotte Hall, Hubert Herre, Ellen Stanton, Sarita Schotta, Denielle Vendetti, Tara Zimnick-Calico, Yon Lambert (staff), Williamsburg Police Chief Mike Yost (guest speaker).

Guests: Joanne Platt, Sgt. Jamie Bartlett, Wellington Watts, Mary Anne Russell, Christa Annett, Roger Fleming, Van Van Fleet, Don Annett, Louis Marcus, Betty Ward, Richard Klingenmaier, Mamey Keleher, Tom Byrne.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 23 June 2008.

Executive Summary: The primary meeting topics included a presentation by Williamsburg Police Chief Mike Yost and a group mapping exercise. The meeting began at 7:10 pm and concluded at 9 pm.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Smedberg opened the meeting with a review of the agenda and reminder that the Task Force was focusing on issues specific to motorcoaches.

2. Review Minutes

Mr. Smedberg requested changes to the draft meeting minutes from the June 9 meeting. Ms. Brown requested that Item #4 in Section #4 be changed to reflect that Mr. Smedberg requested only Ms. Hall provide a business perspective on motorcoach traffic in Old Town. Ms. Brown also requested that on future agenda items regarding other cities, staff use the term "Alternative Strategies" instead of "Best Practices." There being no further discussion, the changes were accepted and the June 9 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Presentation

Mr. Lambert introduced Mr. Yost, the Police Chief of Williamsburg, Va. Mr. Yost referred to a map of Williamsburg provided to Task Force members and guests to discuss strategies that Williamsburg has adopted to manage motorcoach traffic.

(A summary of Williamsburg management strategies and the map itself is available under the June 23 meeting items on the Motorcoach Task Force website at:

www.alexandriava.gov/motorcoach) Mr. Yost mentioned several key points including:

- Williamsburg is different from Alexandria in that there is comparatively little residential housing near the historic area and Colonial Williamsburg
- The City learned that it could communicate effectively with motorcoach operators but not necessarily drivers
- Two distinct types of buses visit Williamsburg. The first are buses that schedule trips to Colonial Williamsburg (CW). These buses, which may number in excess of 500 per day during the summer, are managed by CW and pose few issues for the City. The second set of buses that visit Williamsburg are not scheduled through CW. The City has not performed counts of these buses and does not have any hard estimates of visitation. However, the City seeks to encourage these buses to use the Penske site and abide by rules posted on the City website.
- Williamsburg has developed and is currently improving its wayfinding sign program
- The city has posted "No Thru Bus" signs at three neighborhoods adjacent to Colonial Williamsburg

Several members of the Task Force and the public had specific questions for Mr. Yost including:

Q: Is there a philosophy in place regarding regulation for size of buses?

A: No.

Q: What are the neighborhoods like in the area where buses are regulated?

A: The only residents are CW employees.

Q: Is it correct that the perimeter of the historic area has several other places that are not marked specifically on the map for loading and/or unloading?

A: Yes. Buses can also load and unload on Francis Street.

Q: What was the regulatory process for Williamsburg?

A: We posted the streets as "No Thru Bus" after we passed the enabling legislation. We also raised the fine for parking.

Q: What were the criteria for "No Thru Bus" signs?

A: Whether it was residential. The signs are also posted on streets where it is just too tight for buses to travel.

Q: How many fines have you given to buses?

A: We have contacted many owners, but have not written more than a half dozen summons.

Q: What is the process for tour bus loading/unloading at hotels?

A: It is dealt with at the hotels on hotel property.

Q: Where did the term "non-scheduled" buses in the Williamsburg city code originate?

A: It's unclear. This was most likely included to address transit.

Q: Chief Yost mentioned that there were some problems early with regards to communicating on the website. Have they been resolved?

A: The City still works to get better publicity for its website. The City Manager has raised the issue of kiosks and whether they are needed in certain areas. We do have a consultant working on a sign program.

Q: Can you explain how the city of Poquoson was included in the state code?

A: Mr. Lambert responded that based on a discussion with Mr. Bernie Caton we understand that Poquoson most likely grew into the population bracket which had been defined in an early iteration of the code.

Q: How many neighborhoods in Williamsburg have "No Thru Bus" signage?

A: Three and all within a block or two of the historic area. These are areas that are entirely residential and there is no reason for buses to travel there.

Q: How else is Williamsburg communicating its bus management strategies?

A: The city's internet communication has improved dramatically. However, it really boils down to each independent driver. While not a constant presence, the Police is available in the event that a driver does something unsafe.

Q: Are school buses and hotel shuttles addressed by Williamsburg code?

A: Almost every school bus that visits goes straight to the Visitors Center so those vehicles are not a problem.

Q: Are there any houses in the historic area that are tourist bait?

A: No.

Q: How does Williamsburg deal with overnight parking?

A: Much of it is confined to the Visitors Center. Unscheduled buses that visit use the Penske Center. This site is approximately two miles from the City, out in the woods.

Q: How important are the facilities at Penske to drivers?

A: Very important. The lounge is important and it has kitchen facilities and bathrooms. These were major considerations in the design and construction of the site.

Q: How many buses can park in the Penske area?

A: Possibly 60 or 75. A specific answer was not available.

4. Group Exercise

The Task Force members split into two groups to complete the exercise using the Walking Shed maps provided. The groups had two objectives: (1) Review Motorcoach Walking Shed maps to address opportunities & constraints at existing parking areas and (2) Review

Walking Shed Maps to determine map elements missing or necessary to address drop-off, parking and designated routes. The groups had 30 minutes to complete the exercise and report back.

Upon re-convening, Group #1 provided the following points:

- The drop-off and parking areas are incorrect at 700 King Street (should be 100 N Washington) and the 400 block of King Street is hotel drop-off, not motorcoach drop-off. Items to consider for future versions of the maps include:
- Show width of streets
- Locations of historic buildings (and degree of historic value)
- Color registration needs to be addressed on future maps. The colors chosen are difficult to differentiate.
- Is it possible to have a series of maps to work from?
- Can we show one-way streets?
- Is it possible to section or zoom certain sections of the maps?
- Can we differentiate between types of city owned land?
- Can we differentiate between open space and vacant land?
- Is there a drop off at the Lyceum?
- What is the definition of hospitality?
- Can we designate dock areas?
- Show more street names
- Show King Street Metro station

Group #2 provided the following input:

The loading/unloading areas are incorrect at Christ Church (Washington Street), the Lyceum (Washington Street), Friendship Firehouse (Alfred St) and the Hotel Monaco. Other points include:

- The focus of parking is the waterfront. There is no drop off near Upper King Street.
- Although the parking and drop-off are focused on the waterfront area, this area is heavily residential.
- Is there a way to provide greater dispersion of motorcoach parking in Old Town?
- What role does the Trolley play in dispersion?
- The routes into and out of Old Town are limited and heavily used.
- The most used bus drop-off sites are at four points: Lower King Street, City Hall, Christ Church and the Strand. These areas are all clustered near the waterfront and require passing some residences.
- Can we show the trolley route on future maps?
- Can we also look at other areas for short-term parking including East Eisenhower. If the Masonic Temple is not a viable long-term parking location (15 spaces only) we need to identify another location.
- Look at Jones Point as a potential short-term parking area.

5. Meeting Topic Schedule

Mr. Smedberg requested that staff add a presentation to the schedule for July 28th that would include a synopsis of issues addressed since the 2005 Task Force. The meeting schedule would be altered as follows:

- July 14: Perspectives on Tourism (UMA and ACVA)
- July 28: Review of City of Alexandria Management Process & Current Opportunities
- August 11: Alternative Management Strategies: Charleston, SC
- August 25: Parking, Designated Routes and Alternate Distribution Strategies
- Sept. 8: Wayfinding and Communications

Several Task Force members questioned the need for a Legislative Subcommittee. After some discussion, it was agreed that all future meetings should include time for discussion about Legislative approaches to motorcoach management. The Task Force assented by voice the following:

- A Legislative Subcommittee is not needed.
- All future meetings should include time for Legislative process updates.
- The Task Force does not want to rule out the decision of whether to ask for legislation in 2009, but it may not be prepared to do so by August.

6. Public Comment

The Task Force heard questions and concerns regarding the following issues:

- a) A citizen requested an opportunity to discuss ghost tours, which do not generally use motorcoaches for transporting customers.
- b) A citizen asked whether it is legal for buses to park at the corner of N Fairfax and Queen. (The answer is no.)
- d) There were questions raised about the choice of cities for further study by the Task Force and specifically whether Charleston was appropriate. Several other cities were raised including Washington, DC and Annapolis, Md.
- d) A representative of the Holiday Inn of Old Town expressed his desire to see the Task Force make a commitment that buses were welcome in Old Town. The primary issues are finding places to park and determining adequate routes in and out of Old Town.
- e) A resident of Pendleton Street expressed concerns that she is not hearing a balance in discussion about protecting residents. She specifically asked whether the Task Force was examining whether there is any benefit to residents and explained that the primary issue for residents is that the level (volume) of bus traffic continues to rise.
- f) A resident expressed concerns about possible redevelopment plans for Robinson Terminal and how that would impact existing short-term parking.
- g) A business owner representing Ghost Tours asked the Task Force to continue balancing the rights of businesses with the rights of residents.

There being no further comment, the Task Force adjourned.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

Meeting Minutes
14 July 2008
City Hall, Room 2000

Attendees

Task Force Members: Rob Aronson, Rich Baier (chair), Stephanie Brown, Bert Ely, Mayor William D. Euille, Lt. Dianne Gittins (Alexandria Police Department for Chief David Baker), Charlotte Hall, Hubert Herre, Valerie Ianieri, Ellen Stanton, Sarita Schotta, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Denielle Vendetti, Tara Zimnick-Calico, Yon Lambert (staff), Lorraine Lloyd (staff), United Motorcoach Association President/CEO Victor S. Parra.

Guests: Chuck Andrews (WorldStrides), Bernard Caton (City of Alexandria Legislative Director), Carolyn Cooper, Julien Locault, Van Van Fleet, Ronald Cooper, Jeff Bodnar, Elizabeth Baldwin, Louis Marcus, Betty Ward, Jeff Hernholm, Wellington Watts, Andrea Stowers, Danielle Westphal, Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 14 July 2008.

Executive Summary: The primary meeting topics included a review of legislative issues, a presentation by United Motorcoach Association President/CEO Victor S. Parra and review of future meeting topics. The meeting began at 7:06 pm and concluded at 9 pm.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Baier welcomed everyone to the Motorcoach Task Force meeting and reviewed the topics of the evening.

2. Review Minutes

Mr. Baier reviewed the minutes of the 23 June meeting and asked for comments. There were no comments and the minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Legislative Issues

Mr. Baier introduced Bernard Caton to provide the Task Force with a refresher on the City's legislative process. Mr. Caton said that the last time he could meet with the Task Force would be August 11 and explained that a proposal, if one were available, would need to be solidified by late August. Mr. Caton reminded the group that if it were seeking some broad authority, it could be very difficult to get through the General Assembly.

Mr. Caton said a proposal would require consensus from the Task Force. He encouraged the Task Force to refrain from going to the General Assembly to ask for one type of authority with the intent of modifying it later. Mayor Euille reminded the group that the City's legislative process has three parts: (1) a recommendation by the Task Force, (2) public hearing with the proposal subject to adoption/approval by City Council and (3) formal inclusion in the City's legislative package with sponsorship by a Delegate or Senator.

Mr. Caton closed with a final review of the City's legislative process. He provided the following general dates:

- Task Force proposal (if available) by early September
- Informal meeting between City's legislative subcommittee and the City's legislative delegation in late September
- Formal memo and proposal for City Council in time for the Council's 2nd legislative meeting in October
- Public hearing in November
- Formal approval by City Council in November
- If approved, inclusion in the City's formal legislative package for the General Assembly by January

Ms. Hall asked what the Task Force's plan was. Mr. Baier said the Task Force had agreed to review Legislative Issues as a group at each meeting and asked if others had comments to add.

Ms. Vendetti said she felt the group was still split on this issue.

Mr. Ely said there were some on the Task Force who feel that the key problem in Old Town is the size of the buses and that the City should seek legislative authority from the General Assembly to regulate the size of the buses.

Mr. Aronson said he wanted to clarify that the Task Force could seek authority to regulate (as opposed to regulating) and asked whether anyone on the Task Force felt that the City should not have such authority.

Ms. Brown said the Task Force had not had time or addressed anything that is solutions based. Ms. Brown said the Task Force had not established parameters for what it would do with regulatory authority nor talked about what kind of authority it was seeking. Ms. Brown said Mr. Caton had now twice explained that any request would need to be specific and she believed that Council would also require any request to be specific. She said the time period between now and August 11 would be best spent defining the problem.

Mayor Euille said the Legislative Issues review was included on the agenda to be sure the process is clear. He said there is nothing wrong with having flexibility or suggesting items for consideration because between the work of the Task Force, public hearings and adoption the items may fall off the radar screen.

Mr. Ely said Mr. Caton had outlined a clear deadline and unless a proposal is ready by August 11 the Task Force may have missed its opportunity for this year.

Mr. Smedberg said there are numerous examples of regulatory authority the Council has but does not use and there may be an opportunity to seek some authority that it reserves for use at a later date. Mr. Smedberg also said that he had personally experienced frustration with motorcoaches and that problems do exist.

Ms. Brown said that a good process would identify problems and how to solve them. She

said once the Task Force identifies problems it would speed the process of proposing solutions. She said the tourism industry is anxious about bringing solutions forward first and would want to be sure that any solutions address what has been clearly identified as a problem.

Mr. Smedberg said the regulatory options had been put on the table because the Task Force may those tools to address some issues.

Mayor Euille said he understood the Task Force had chosen not to establish a Legislative Subcommittee but that there still may be a need to seek authority from the Legislature to do what it needs to do. He suggested that the Task Force come up with a proposal which it could fine tune.

Mr. Smedberg said the Task Force needed to work collaboratively to effectively manage what could be an increase in tour bus traffic, given the historic and enforcement constraints in place.

Mr. Ely asked whether it would be appropriate for members of the Task Force to work together on a proposal. Mr. Baier reminded the group that no more than two members of the Task Force could work together on a proposal because of FOIA and Sunshine Laws.

Mr. Herre said the Task Force had agreed at previous meetings that these issues should not be addressed in subcommittee and that everyone should be involved in the discussion.

Mayor Euille said that the July 28th meeting should be used to bring items to the table to work on this issue.

Ms. Hall said that many members of the Task Force represent other organizations and that these organizations' input would be needed. She asked whether the City Council planned to go forward with a proposal regardless of whether it had Task Force support. Mayor Euille said to his knowledge there was no plan by Council to ask for any authority and that was the reason the City Manager had established a Task Force.

Ms. Hall said the Task Force needed more time to clarify problems and solutions.

Mr. Aronson said the City could acquire authority to regulate but not use it.

Ms. Hall asked what the City would regulate.

Ms. Stanton said there are concerns about asking for regulatory authority because at the previous meeting not everyone knew where the parking locations were. It is possible the City is not adequately enforcing or communicating existing rules and regulations.

Mayor Euille said that it was part of the Task Force charge to find out where buses go after they drop off and that the group needed to focus on solutions. He suggested that the next meeting be used to articulate problems and potential solutions.

Ms. Vendetti said the Task Force needed to focus on solutions and not Legislative issues.

Mr. Baier said that the July 28th meeting would be used to define the problem and outline tools that may provide solutions. He encouraged members to provide staff with problems and tools to arrive at solutions.

Ms. Zimmnick-Calico said that this approach would allow Task Force members to communicate these issues with their constituencies.

Mr. Ely asked whether the Task Force should provide staff with problems and solutions.

Ms. Brown said that some of the groups represented on the Task Force do not meet until August and that for solutions to have broad-based support, they would need time to clarify and discuss these concepts.

Mr. Baier said that staff would create a matrix for use on July 28th that would be used to identify problems and solutions. He said the next meeting would be devoted to that issue.

Ms. Zimmnick-Calico asked whether data would be available to help clarify problems.

Mr. Baier said that data may not be available for each issue but that this would not necessarily preclude the issue from being included for consideration. He reiterated that the meeting on the 28th would be dedicated to formulation of a matrix to articulate problems, tools and short-term or long-term solutions.

4 & 5. Presentation: Perspectives on Tourism, United Motorcoach Association (Victor S. Parra)

Mr. Parra began by thanking the Task Force for the invitation to speak and told the group that the UMA is located in Alexandria on South West Street. He told the Task Force that the UMA has no tolerance for illegal activity and encouraged the City to ticket motorcoaches that are breaking the law.

Mr. Parra said that the limit on motorcoach size is 45 feet long and 102 inches in width. He said the limit had been in place for at least 20 years and that motorcoaches are not getting bigger.

Mr. Parra addressed the UMA/ABA challenge to the District of Columbia regarding Charter Bus Permit Fees and said the UMA would likely appeal the case. However, he said the case may or may not be relevant to Alexandria because DC carries statehood status. The UMA is considering a challenge on the basis that the fees violate the commerce clause.

The issue of emissions is a global issue and Mr. Parra provided a handout with a proposed rule by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection that he felt addressed the issue. The purpose and effect of the new rule is to reduce emissions from unnecessary, long-duration diesel engine idling.

A task force member asked whether there had been localities that restrict the size of

buses. Mr. Parra said there are certain areas that had limited the size of buses but he was not aware of any challenges to individual regulations.

Mr. Parra said the height of tour buses is limited to 13' 2" and that double-decker buses have low ceilings.

A task force member asked whether the Florida EPA rule would be adopted at the federal level. Mr. Parra said that he understood the federal government was reviewing similar rules but that there were no proposals.

Ms. Schotta asked to what extent routes are chosen by drivers or whether operators plan routes. Mr. Parra said typically tour operators plan routes. Ms. Hall said that sometime drivers alter routes. Ms. Brown said that many operators are at corporate locations and may not actually be on the trip.

Mr. Baier asked whether drivers are required to pay traffic tickets. Mr. Parra said that it depends on the company policy.

Mr. Ely asked about maximum weight per axle. Mr. Parra said that weight is federally regulated and he did not know an answer off the top of his head. Mr. Parra said buses are typically friendlier to road surfaces than trucks because the frame is monoquaque constructed and discussed four major bus manufacturers.

Mr. Smedberg said many buses are too large to make turns at intersections. Mr. Baier asked whether it was possible to provide the minimum turning radius for the most conservative bus. An answer was not available.

Mr. Ely asked about damage to utilities and underground infrastructure by trucks and buses. Mr. Baier said that buses generally have less impact than trucks. A study for the Woodrow Wilson Bridge based on stress gauges and photographic evidence found that the primary issue was the "terminal serviceability" life of the pavement and not impacts on underground utilities or on neighboring structures.

Ms. Schotta said many intersections are problematic because cars park too close to the intersection and that this may be addressed by enforcement.

Ms. Stanton asked if the Association provided guidance on designated routes, particularly in mid-sized cities with historic significance. Mr. Parra said that the UMA had not done anything with broad-based applicability because every area is unique. Ms. Lloyd said that the American Bus Association has made some literature available and Mr. Parra confirmed the UMA willingness to provide communications assistance in "Bus and Motorcoach News."

Mr. Smedberg asked about the UMA membership. Mr. Parra said that its membership now exceeded 900 companies and that many of its members are small businesses, not large companies.

Mayor Euille asked whether there were logistical rules of thumb or industry standards relative to drop-off areas. Mr. Parra said that there is no standard but that time was a larger issue than distance.

Ms. Schotta asked what portion of the industry the UMA represents. Mr. Parra said there are roughly 3,000 registered motorcoach operators and those who do not belong are often one- and two-bus operators. He said the UMA represents approximately 75 percent of the industry. Mr. Parra is not aware of any bus operator associations.

Mr. Ely asked if there were different sizes of buses based on seating maximums. Mr. Parra said that there are many different manufacturers and perhaps a dozen more companies that make smaller buses.

Mr. Smedberg asked if there were examples of other communities that had done a good job in dealing with motorcoach issues and whether the UMA had played a role in those processes. Mr. Parra said that Florida had addressed the issue of idling in a productive manner. New York raised idling concerns and the UMA was not satisfied with its solution. Mr. Parra said that in most communities the two major concerns are parking and boarding (drop-off areas).

Ms. Stanton asked to what degree a voluntary plan would work. Mr. Parra said that any plan developed by this group would be supported by the UMA.

A task force member asked about directional signage. Mr. Parra said directional signage is vital. Mr. Parra said designated routes may make sense depending on conditions and that many buses use GPS for navigational purposes.

Mr. Ely asked whether the notion of limits on tourism capacity comes up in historic areas. Mr. Parra said Charleston has constraints but that they have never said "we don't want anymore" and he had not heard that before.

Mr. Baier asked whether Mr. Parra's personal and professional background provided any insight as to certain streets to avoid in Alexandria. Mr. Parra said cobblestone streets were an obvious choice.

Mr. Parra introduced Mr. Chuck Andrews, the operations coordinator for WorldStrides which he said is the largest student travel company in the world. The company provides trips for between 500,000 and 600,000 students per year. He provided the following figures for WorldStrides in Alexandria: Between April 1 and July 1, 2008, the company booked over 7,000 hotel rooms in the City, brought 1,124 buses into the City and fed 53,396 people.

Mr. Andrews said the company supported the Task Force efforts and designated routes in particular. The company produces map books for its drivers which it includes on its 4,753 buses annually. The company is headquartered in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Mayor Euille asked whether cities use on-the-street monitors to provide additional guidance for buses. Mr. Andrews said that generally cities use local police for enforcement.

Mr. Andrews addressed the issue of jitneys generally and specifically the use of jitneys at Capitol Hill. He said Capitol Hill is beginning to adjust its policies because of logistical

problems and that jitneys may not provide the service planners expected. There may also be problems with respect to ADA issues.

Mr. Bodnar (guest) encouraged the City to strike a balance that addressed designated routes and parking. He said a jitney service would be logistically difficult and that any parking area would need facilities for drivers. If the Task Force recommended designated routes, the routes would get communicated to drivers.

Mr. Parra said that Atlantic City may provide a good study area for Alexandria because the bus issue is a major one.

Ms. Brown provided a handout "Motor Coach Volume at Mount Vernon" showing that in peak season (May) the destination averages 83 buses per day and that in July it averages 13. Ms. Brown also said that from a business perspective the parking at the Masonic Memorial does not work. She said Alexandria's tourism dynamic is based on proximity to DC and it is unlike Charleston. Ms. Brown said there needs to be some structured approach to fact finding so that the solution the Task Force finds addresses the problem.

6. Meeting Topic Schedule

The Task Force agreed to focus on a discussion of problems and potential solutions at its July 28 meeting. The August 11 meeting is currently reserved for a guest from Charleston, SC.

7. Public Comment

The Task Force heard questions and concerns regarding the following issues:

- a) Mr. Van Van Fleet said that the issue of Ghost Tours did not come up during his tenure as President of the Old Town Civic Association. Mr. Van Fleet reviewed a list of OTCA Guidance to its Task Force representatives which has been provided to the Task Force previously.
- b) Ms. Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet said attention needs to be given to buses coming in trains, like 5 or 6 buses together. While the drivers of trains of buses she has seen try to make decisions for unloading/loading that are the least disruptive, the City could consider this a problem that they should help in solving.
- c) Mr. Wellington Watts said that certain spots in the City are adequate and can accommodate 20-30 buses.
- d) Mr. Poul Hertel said that the Task Force needed to spend time defining the problem.

Mr. Aronson asked about permitting on the George Washington Memorial Parkway and whether they were free. Ms. Brown said the National Park Service instituted \$50 fees and raised the issue initially to address parking at the Potowmack Landing site and in other locations where the park service had specific infrastructure issues.

There being no further comment, the Task Force adjourned.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

Meeting Minutes
28 July 2008
City Hall, Room 2000

Attendees

Task Force Members: Rob Aronson, Rich Baier (chair), Stephanie Brown, Bert Ely, Mayor William D. Euille, Chief David Baker, Charlotte Hall, Hubert Herre, Greg Ogden, Sarita Schotta, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Denielle Vendetti, Tara Zimnick-Calico, Yon Lambert (staff), Lorraine Lloyd (staff).

Guests: Peter Pantuso, Wellington Watts, Joanne Platt, Elizabeth Baldwin, Louis Marcus.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 28 July 2008.

Executive Summary: The primary meeting topics included a group exercise for problem and issue identification. The Task Force also heard a presentation by American Bus Association President and CEO Peter J. Pantuso. The meeting began at 7:10 pm and concluded at 9 pm.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Baier welcomed everyone to the Motorcoach Task Force meeting and reviewed the topics of the evening.

2. Review Minutes & Report Back from Constituent Groups

Mr. Baier reviewed the minutes of the 14 July meeting and asked for comments. There were no comments and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Ms. Brown reported that the Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association has established a subcommittee to address motorcoach issues and will provide input on issues such as parking and unloading.

Ms. Schotta said that she has a report by a group of Duke Street residents called "Friends of Old Town." She said the report documents perceived damages to residents' homes.

3. Group Exercise: Problem/Issue Identification

Task Force members had previously been seated at one of four small group tables to which a facilitator has been previously assigned. The members reviewed a list of General Categories/Issues provided by staff and discussed the items on each table, including DRAFT (blank) "Issues Matrix."

Each table selected a recorder and began by individually reviewing comments previously provided by members via e-mail. The members were also encouraged to provide additional individual comments on index cards. Once the group members had time for individual comment, each table consolidated its list of issues onto flip charts.

Once each group had provided its issues, each member of the Task Force was given six colored dots to “vote” for the issues believed to be of highest priority/most important. The list of group issues followed by total votes (in parentheses) is outlined as follows:

GROUP 1

Volume of coaches changes seasonally	(3)
Realistic loading/unloading	(5)
How to load/unload overnight guests (hotels)	(0)
Lack of designated coach routes puts coaches onto sensitive streets (small, historical)	(11)
Industry widespread, difficult to notify in advance	(0)

GROUP 2

Bus size	(0)
Enforcement (moving/parking & idling)	(7)
Lack of short & long term parking	(4)
Lack of coach info for operators & residents	(1)
Loading & Unloading	(3)
Signage	(3)
Resident parking	(0)
Drive through coaches vs. Stay coaches	(2)
Noise level (speakers)	(0)
Structural damage from vibrations	(0)
Designated routes (lack)	(0)
Street infrastructure	(0)
Tree damage (clearance)	(0)

GROUP 3

Volume/density	(3)
Base of facts	
Density	
Size	
Noise	
Parking (illegal)	
Handicapped/aging	(6)
Parking- shortfall (long & short)	(9)
Safety & Navigation	
Enforcement	
High-density pedestrian	(3)

GROUP 4

Lack of short term parking	(6)
Lack of long-term parking	(0)
Parking is too concentrated	
(smaller pocket short term)	(0)
Loading/unloading. Lack of adequate areas.	
Too concentrated.	(3)
Lack of communication to drivers. Business	
Not giving the information/clearer materials.	(4)
Lack of recommended routes or prohibited streets	(0)
No personal greeters/bus monitors	(1)
Wayfinding not adequate	(0)
Enforcement (improve)	(4)

Once the groups completed “voting” on priorities, the Task Force had a discussion about all the issues and consolidated them into the following list of primary issues/general categories. The list is presented in order of priority and each issue/category includes a recommendation about whether it should be addressed by short-term and/or long-term solutions.

6. Lack of designated routes puts coaches on sensitive streets/safety (short-term)
7. Lack of short term & overnight parking (short-term and long-term)
8. Enforcement (short-term and long-term)
9. Loading and unloading (short-term)
10. Communication/Education (short-term)

The group agreed to use a portion of its next meeting, August 11, to discuss tools and short-term solutions that may address Issue #1: *Lack of designated routes puts coaches on sensitive streets/safety.*

4. Meeting Topic Schedule

The August 11 meeting is currently reserved for a guest presentation by City of Charleston, SC Director of Tourism Vanessa Turner-Maybank. A short discussion will follow to address Issue #1. Task Force members were encouraged to provide Mr. Baier and Mr. Lambert with questions for Ms. Maybank.

5. Public Comment

The Task Force heard a presentation by American Bus Association President and CEO Peter J. Pantuso, followed by questions and concerns from the public.

Mr. Pantuso told the group that the ABA represents over 65% of all coaches including 800 individual coach companies, 200+ touring companies and 2,800 suppliers. Mr. Pantuso made the following general discussion points (as provided in his hand written notes):

- Coaches are unique in that they provide \$7,500 to \$13,000 per unit
- Coaches are the cleanest and most environmentally friendly form of transportation with less of an environmental impact that portrayed.
- Buses are less than 50,000 pounds (60% lighter than a tractor trailer).
- Visitation may be on/off but buses are increasingly seeing growth beyond students and seniors. The baby boomer market is growing more high end.
- The perception of motorcoaches is \$50 hotel rooms and fast food.
- Greenbrier does 100s of coaches annually.
- Buses are the safest form of transportation with owners and drivers who are concerned about passengers, the environment and overall experience.
- Permits will do little than drive companies away.
- Permits may be more effective where the City is the destination, not a drive-through as you describe
- Other cities that require permits cannot fit a motorcoach at all
- Cultural/historical are popular tours and Old Town has this
- As DC becomes more restrictive, Old Town has the opportunity to benefit from business and longer reservations
- You can't let everyone off at Washington Street
- Loads are averaging 40% or 80% (not 30%)
- No-one wants idling but it must be reasonable for brakes and for comfort
- DC restrictions are primarily around the Capital and as a result of Capital Police restrictions
- Parking & enforcement are important, but cannot have one without the other

The following residents also provided comment:

- a) Mr. Van Van Fleet said that citizens were not going to be happy with the result if the Task Force did not restrict buses completely from Old Town.
- b) Mr. Wellington Watts said that he represents ghost tours and that 60% of his business is from motorcoaches. He averages 130 buses per month and four buses per night. Mr. Watts said that it is important to streamline the process so that it does not impact residential neighborhoods.
- c) Mr. Poul Hertel said that references to the previous Task Force and its economic analysis need to consider that the analysis was not fly by night and that its results were conservative. He urged the group not to skimp on new short-term parking. He reminded the group that when discussing bus routes, it needs to consider that DASH and MetroBuses are shorter than motorcoaches and that the same routes may not work for both types of buses. Mr. Hertel also said that the previous Task Force did look at numbers and that the current Task Force may be able to extrapolate bus counts by focusing on Washington Street.

There being no further comment, the Task Force adjourned.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

**Meeting Minutes
11 August 2008
City Hall, Room 2000**

Attendees

Task Force Members: Rob Aronson, Rich Baier (chair), Stephanie Brown, Mayor William D. Euille, Lt. Cleveland Spruill (Alexandria Police Department for Chief David Baker), Hubert Herre, Greg Ogden, Ellen Stanton, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Tara Zimmick-Calico, Yon Lambert (staff), Vanessa Turner-Maybank (City of Charleston, Director of Tourism/Clerk of Council).

Guests: Van Van Fleet, Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet, Louis Marcus, Betty Ward, Joanne Platt, Elizabeth Baldwin, Dick Moose.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 11 August 2008.

Executive Summary:

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Baier welcomed everyone to the Motorcoach Task Force meeting and reviewed the topics of the evening.

2. Review Minutes & Report Back from Constituent Groups

Mr. Baier reviewed the minutes of the July 28 meeting and asked for comments. An amendment was discussed and adopted. The minutes were adopted by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Brown reported that the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association has formed a stakeholders group to keep informed of the work of the Task Force. The stakeholders group has met twice to explore in detail the issue of how to handle permits, registration and possible places for short-term parking. The ACVA plans to collaborate with the City on these issues and others that are being considered by the Task Force.

Mr. Smedberg asked Ms. Brown who represented the Task Force on the Chamber of Commerce legislative subcommittee. Ms. Brown reported that she and Charlotte Hall attended the meeting. Ms. Christine Michaels had contacted Mr. Baier but both he and Mr. Lambert were unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Lambert provided the subcommittee with minutes and the list of key issues to be addressed by the Task Force.

3. Presentation: City of Charleston Director of Tourism, Vanessa Turner-Maybank

Mr. Baier introduced Ms. Turner-Maybank and referred the Task Force to the handouts provided. He specifically referenced the Issues memo pad and said that Ms. Turner-Maybank would address the issues and questions the Task Force had raised.

Ms. Turner-Maybank said that in 1980 the City created a blue ribbon committee to study the effects of tourism on Charleston since tourism is a vitally important industry which maintains the tax base. However, along with bringing in visitors there is also a need for management techniques. The Committee took four years to enact an ordinance, which was adopted in 1984. Ms. Turner-Maybank was hired as the City's first and only Tourism Director. The Committee - which was made up of representatives from neighborhoods, carriage operators and those concerned with the economy - considered many ideas, including many of those outlined in the (Alexandria) Task Force charter. Recognizing that tourism is an important aspect of the committee but that the quality of life of people who live in the City was just as important, so the need for balance between those entities is very important.

Ms. Turner-Maybank provided a general overview of the city's ordinance and began with the hours of touring. Beginning in 1984, the City had touring hours between 8 am and 6 pm for touring (or 7:30 pm during daylight savings time). The ordinance has been tweaked a number of times because the Tourism Commission meets monthly. It had major overhauls in 1994 and 1998.

The City also established a framework for licensing tour guides. Charleston first began licensing tour guides in 1952. When the ordinance went into effect, there were many licensed tour guides who were doing tours but there were no guidelines on the number of tour vehicles that could be in the tour district at a specific time.

There were also no specific guidelines about the size of vehicles. There were concerns about double-decker buses and the turning radius of vehicles because some of the buses could not make the turns. The City came up with categories of buses. The first category is the small bus which is not longer than 25' and must be approved by the Commission to become a certified tour vehicle. The specific application (a certificate of appropriateness) speaks to pollution control and the buses are physically measured so the City knows what vehicles are best suited on narrow streets as compared to larger streets and state highways.

Certified vehicles have mostly free range in the City. The only streets they are restricted to are cobblestone streets, brick streets and certain areas with blind spots. They are regulated and must use the flow of traffic and speed limits. Even though they may have visitors, they are not allowed to impeded traffic. They often pull over for descriptive purposes; the ordinance does not say this but the City does not want them to impede traffic.

Years ago the City had a category for Charter buses which is not used any longer. This category included the buses used by public utilities for transportation. This category included buses longer than 25' but not longer than 35'. These buses had prescribed routes and were used on major streets that would accommodate buses and a lot of the buses were the same as their regular (transportation routes). This category is no longer used.

The City currently has a category for over-the-road motorcoaches which can be up to 45' in length and can carry 45 to 55 people. These vehicles uses perimeter routes (refer to map) which are streets highlighted in blue and are the only vehicles allowed for use by motorcoaches. The City does not mail maps or permits; buses must have permits (yellow) for touring. Permits say that tour guides are responsible for making sure that buses adhere to certain streets. If the bus deviates from the streets (unless for an obstruction) then the tour guide is cited, not the driver.

The City also has a green permit which is for transportation. This clearly outlines the route for this particular size vehicle to get from Point A to Point B. The city does not allow buses into the City Market but it does have loading/unloading areas. Buses are permitted in the restricted areas, for instance, to go to hotels but they are specifically permitted using widest streets and then depart again using large streets as well.

A City parking permit also indicates where buses may be officially parked.

Ms. Turner-Maybank said that in 1984, there were 12 motorcoaches allowed to tour per hour in conjunction with the certified tour buses and the City had 20 certified tour buses. The City now has 33 certified tour buses. The City has a system in place by which its traffic and transportation experts (working with consultants) have indicated that City streets, in conjunction with carriages and other traffic, can utilize approximately 35 certified tour buses. The City does not have 35 buses out at any time and the owners have multiple vehicles since tours go in different directions.

Regarding motorcoaches, in 1984, the City allowed 12 motorcoaches per hour to tour perimeter routes. The ordinance was tweaked in 1994 and reduced to eight (8) because of traffic congestion. The number (8 per hour) was established after a comprehensive study by consultants who considered the City's traffic patterns for carriage traffic, pedestrians and typical commuter traffic. During the lunchtime hour the number was reduced to four (4). In 1998, the number was reduced again to six (6) buses and the City is currently looking at this number again. The six buses are those on two-hour tours.

The City has worked with Savannah, Newport, New Orleans and San Antonio to assist in the development of tour bus management strategies.

The City devised a system where within the City buses avoid conflicts by touring in two hour spans. The tour guides are told how many may be out during a certain time and the direction they may travel (north or south) which affords them the opportunity to utilize loading zones without causing congestion in certain zones.

Originally there were concerns that Charleston was going to turn the motorcoach industry away, but that did not occur. Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the Convention & Visitors Bureau said that it initially thought the ordinance would be a lemon but instead it became lemonade.

Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the buses that are regulated are specifically for those that are touring, not transportation. However, loading and unloading zones may be used for transportation. The limited number (six buses) is only for designated touring vehicles - motorcoaches.

The 25' vehicle is a certified tour vehicle and has free range of the City, including streets in the market.

Larger motorcoaches are considered perimeter route vehicles, not certified tour buses. If buses come in (such as church vehicles) and are not certified then it is treated like any other vehicle on the perimeter route and is treated as one of the six allowed buses per hour.

Ms. Turner-Maybank addressed a question about the time buses run in Charleston. Transportation related buses run 24 hours but not in residential districts. If they are conducting special events outside the City and coming back inside at midnight to a hotel, the permit would indicate what streets it uses to get to the hotel.

Ms. Turner-Maybank addressed a question about how buses work with traffic. Buses pull over to avoid impeding traffic but the ordinance specifically addresses carriages and that they may pull over for descriptive purposes.

Ms. Turner-Maybank addressed a question about tour guide licenses. Charleston began licensing tour guides in 1952 and now administers tests for tour guides, which are both written and oral.

Ms. Turner-Maybank addressed a question about bus arrival. She said that prior to getting to their destination, buses come to a visitor reception and transportation center in the northern portion of the City away from the historic district. Buses come into the center to obtain a permit and meet a registered guide who then comes to the tour office to pick up their permits.

Ms. Turner-Maybank addressed a question about enforcement, which is done by the City police department. Initially, the City used officers that reported to Ms. Turner-Maybank but the City found that it was important to have sworn officers for enforcement and who could address speeding or accidents.

Ms. Turner-Maybank said that she has 10 staff persons assigned to tourism management and the budget for the program is roughly \$650,000. The cost for permits is \$14 per day, per vehicle. The cost for a motorcoach that is spending three days in Charleston would be: $\$14 \times 3 = \42 . They may need nine permits (including touring and parking permits) but it is a \$14 daily permit fee for as many permits as a vehicle needs.

Costs do go to offset the operation of the office of tourism management, which is relatively self-sufficient. Carriages contribute a lot to the costs as well.

Ms. Turner-Maybank referred to the parking maps provided and referenced long-term parking, including a large garage that encourages people to park - including up to nine motorcoaches. The City does have a great deal of parking as it relates to buses. By managing the number of people who get to loading zones, it makes it better for the drivers as well as the City.

Regarding fees, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that in addition to permits the certified tour buses also pay annually to the City \$300 per bus and \$50 per passenger seat.

Carriage companies are also regulated because of the associated environmental issues. They pay a fee of \$17,500 to put one carriage in the loading zone. It is an annual fee. Some companies elect to buy two spots for a total fee of \$35,000. The annual fee is what they pay to have a slot in the loading zone.

They also pay a fee to the gatekeeper that is a part of the tourism division. The City is organized into five zones. In order for a carriage to get from the loading zone into the City (Zones 1-3) there is a gatekeeper system that uses a “bingo machine” type device that tells the carriages what zone they may be able to go into.

Charleston has five carriage companies each with between 85 and 100 carriages. The system has changed several times but there are never more than 20 carriages on the street at any given time. The City knows this because the carriages must have a medallion to get onto the street. If they are caught on the street without a medallion, they must go to the City’s livability court and the City has lawyers that prosecute them. Ordinances may carry 30 days in jail and up to \$500 in fines so this is taken seriously. Small tickets are \$167.

The city’s zones of operation are also used by certified tour vehicles. While the City allows 35 buses, they are not on the street at the same time. At the beginning of the year, each company must provide the City with a copy of the route it plans to use for each vehicle and when presented to the City staff ensures there is no overlap to avoid having a wagon-train effect. The ordinance continues to evolve and is tweaked by staff.

In response to questions, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that there is a Police Department Tourism Enforcement Office and her office does work with police officers to deal appropriately with buses. Police do differentiate between buses that have visited the City before and those that habitually break rules. Ms. Turner-Maybank said that Charleston is 115,000 people with 36,000 in the peninsula. It is approximately 150 square miles including all islands.

In response to a question, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that Charleston does have designated signage which it works on with its traffic and transportation staff. The City has signs for the following areas: Loading & Unloading, Long-term, Carriage Loading Zones, and Certified Tour Buses areas.

Permits are never mailed and staff goes over details when issued, always in person. Local tour guides understand the parking areas best and City staff reviews routes, parking areas and loading/unloading with tour guides to be sure there are no questions.

Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the ordinance has been changed recently to ensure there are more guides for each group.

In response to a question about carriage fees, Ms. Turner-Maybank said there are 20 slots for carriages to do tours in Zones 1-3. There are five companies that pay \$17,500 annually to operate as well as a \$3 gate fee when they go through the gate each time.

In response to a question about routes, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that motorcoaches are not used on residential streets and that it is very rare for there to be after-hours events in residential areas. The City does not limit transportation routes because it has state highways but it can control for touring. (Alexandria does control all roadways in the City except for Interstates and sections of the George Washington Memorial Parkway inside City limits.)

In response to a question about medallions, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the City owns medallions and issues them. The 20 medallions that are owned by the City are provided to carriages as they pass through the gate and carriages are allowed to operate under the same hours as buses. The medallions are "good" for 75 minutes although most tours are 45 minutes. If they are keeping medallions for longer than 75 minutes, then they are impeding someone else's right to use a medallion. The City does run out of medallions at certain times of the year, such as during Easter. During Easter, the City also opens up other Zones and encourages carriages to use Zones 4 and 5.

In response to a question about the number of tour buses entering the City, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the City has become a year-round destination. However, the majority of buses come in April, May and June, followed by late August, September, October and some of November. The City issues between 2,600 and 2,800 permits annually to motorcoaches. Of these, it is a combination of types but typically many touring permits are issued.

A citizen in the audience commented that although the system sounds complicated and heavily regulated, the experience for the consumer is superior.

Mr. Baier mentioned the Task Force primary issues which include routes, short-term/long-term parking, enforcement, loading/unloading and communication. Mr. Baier said that while no city is the same Ms. Turner-Maybank's presentation did touch on each of these.

In response to a question from a resident about the Tourism Commission, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the Commission had representation from residents, historians and economists. Issues are sent to subcommittees and worked on monthly. The Commission provides a checks-and-balances system.

In response to a question from a Task Force member, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the Charleston visitors' center began operating in 1991 - several years after the ordinance. Prior to the opening of the visitor's center, the City used a small visitor's center in an existing building which worked well but did not provide the experience of the new visitors' center.

Ms. Turner-Maybank said that in 1984 the Mayor had outlined the vision for the visitors' center and for how Charleston would become a leader in tourism management. The City owns the Visitors Center and staffs it, but works with its local Convention and Visitors Bureau.

In response to a question about walking tours, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the City has a number of walking tours and that groups are limited to 20 people per tour (or 25 people for school children). Ms. Turner-Maybank said that Charleston has ghost tours and that the City uses the tour guide exam to be sure that they are providing accurate history. However, she is aware that tour guides do occasionally embellish from time to time.

In response to a question about loading and unloading, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that only a few zones are also designated as bus stops for transit vehicles. Most loading and unloading zones for tour buses are assigned, although there are a few on major thoroughfares that are also designated for local bus stops.

In response to a question about idling, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that buses may only idle for five minutes. When buses use loading and unloading, they can only stay for five minutes before going to short-term parking areas. It then comes back to pick up later.

In response to a question about restrictions on loading/unloading at hotels, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that buses can stay as long as it takes to load or unload but that some areas still may require special permits. The buses are not allowed to idle indefinitely; they are limited to five minutes. Once it unloads, the bus must go to parking areas. There are no restrictions about when they can access but they must follow the designated routes. Most of the hotels in Charleston are north of Broad Street and away from residential areas.

In response to a question about buses' length of stay, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that Charleston does get "day trip" buses, for instance from Myrtle Beach. However, to take a two hour tour they must also get a permit.

In response to a question about jitneys, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that a service such as this was considered but it is not used. The city determined that this was an added expense to those who scheduled the tours and that there was a way to balance the need by having permits. The people are getting an opportunity to see the intricate areas they want to see, but they have to walk. The larger vehicles are restricted to certain routes (with loading and unloading zones) but for others to see certain areas they must walk.

In response to a question about accessibility for persons with mobility impairments, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that if there are people with mobility impairments they allow a special permit for that person and others with them to disembark at certain locations but not for the entire group.

In response to a question about signage, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that Charleston previously had its own signs. However, they found that some people were not paying attention to certain colors and are instead more familiar with international signs. The signs

have been changed to international colors (red and white).

In response to a question about long-term parking, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the City knew that it needed to find a place for people to park in the lower part of the peninsula. So, there are certain areas in the lower part of the peninsula that have both short-term and long-term parking. The visitors' center was kept for people in the upper part of the peninsula, with the first floor designated for motorcoaches. The center is also across the street from the museum with parking (long-term and short-term) for cars on the street at the museum.

In response to a question about short-term parking, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that most parking is located on major streets with ample width without a lot of traffic. The loading and unloading is on major streets and not in residential areas, except for the museum which is located near a residential area.

Ms. Turner-Maybank said that Charleston had conducted several traffic studies, including studies performed by outside consultants. In addition, Planning and GIS staff helped determine routes.

In response to a question about financing and the source of revenues, Ms. Turner-Maybank outlined the following:

- Tour permits (\$14 per day)
- Certified Tour Buses (annually \$300 plus \$50 per passenger seat) for 33 buses
- The carriage fee is \$17,500 for each of the five companies, but usually this is multiplied by seven (7) because some companies want opportunities to put two carriages in the loading zone
- Carriages also contribute a \$3 gate fee each time it goes into the market. (This is not paid at the time, but it accounted for by City Staff.)
- Additionally, the City does not clean up after horses. There is an equine sanitation fee. The carriage operators are required to pay the monthly fee for equine sanitation to the City to manage the annual contract. The most recent bid was between \$140,000 and \$160,000 annually for the carriage companies, which is divided and paid by the companies based on the number of carriages they send through the gate.
- Walking tours have a tour fee. Each person pays a \$0.50 fee for the tour which is used for beautification. This is incorporated into the ticket price.
- Tour guides pay a \$50 fee to take the exam, as well as the purchase of the book which is also \$50.

In response to a question about visitors per year, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that Charleston has 4 million tourists annually and it is a \$3.09 billion industry. (Ms. Brown said that the estimates of Alexandria tourism are about 2 million visitors per year and \$500 million in spending by visitors but that new and more accurate numbers may be available soon.)

In response to a question about the proximity of residential and commercial areas, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that there are a number of mixed-use areas in the City and there are ordinances that address the issues. The perimeter routes allow buses to get into residential

areas without being intrusive and people have the right to walk in residential areas anytime (or during touring hours if part of a tour). There is not much residential activity near the loading and unloading areas.

The City does have police that circle the touring areas.

In response to a question about how she would counsel a City with no designated routes, Ms. Turner-Maybank said in Charleston certified tour buses are able to use any routes in the residential district but that large buses are not. Certified tour buses are small vehicles less than 25 feet in length and can be accommodated in the residential district without being intrusive. However, the City does provide transportation access to hotels, etc...

Ms. Brown said that Alexandria's challenge is that there are hotels, boat companies and businesses on the waterfront and that it is difficult to come up with a route that does not impact on residents.

Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the City might come up with loading and unloading areas that are close enough to these areas but not within the concentrated residential areas and indicate to visitors that they will have to walk.

In response to a question about whether the City needed to change any streets to one way, Ms. Turner-Maybank said that the City had not and, in fact, had converted several streets to two-way.

4. Next Steps/Preparation for Group Exercise at Next Meeting

Mr. Baier said that Deputy City Manager Mark Jinks would attend a future meeting to provide a review of the 2003 Alexandria Visitors Center Report. In addition, the Task Force agreed to address its Primary Issues (#1 through 5) and its next meeting and Mr. Baier encouraged input by the Task Force prior to the next meeting.

There being no further comment, the Task Force adjourned.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes
8 September 2008
City Hall, Room 2000**

Attendees

Task Force Members: Rob Aronson, Rich Baier (chair), Stephanie Brown, Mayor William D. Euille, Chief David Baker, Hubert Herre, Greg Ogden, Ellen Stanton, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Tara Zimnick-Calico, Denielle Vendetti, Charlotte Hall, Bert Ely, Ellen Stanton, Mark Jinks (staff), Lorraine Lloyd (staff), Jesse Harman (staff), Yon Lambert (staff).

Guests: Ken Presley, Betty Ward, Wellington Watts, Danielle Westphal, Van Van Fleet, Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet, Elizabeth Baldwin, Mamey Keleher, Thomas Byrne.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 8 September 2008.

Executive Summary:

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Baier welcomed everyone to the Motorcoach Task Force meeting and reviewed the topics of the evening.

2. Review Minutes & Report Back from Constituent Groups

Mr. Baier reviewed the minutes of the August 11 meeting and asked for comments. Ms. Brown proposed an amendment to the minutes which was approved. The minutes were adopted by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Brown reported that the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association stakeholders group regarding Motorcoach issues is continuing to meet. The stakeholders group is exploring how to handle permits, registration and possible places for short-term parking. The ACVA plans to collaborate with the City on these issues and others that are being considered by the Task Force.

3. Presentation: Review of the 2003 Alexandria Visitors Center Report. Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager

Mr. Baier introduced Mr. Jinks who provided a review of the 2003 Visitors Center Report. Mr. Jinks said the effort began in 1999 with a feasibility study focused on Alexandria Union Station as a potential site for a visitor's center. Neighboring civic associations were critical of the study and City Council opted to conduct a more in-depth study.

The 2003 Visitors Center Report included was a study led by Parter International, Inc. and included stakeholder interviews, a SWOT analysis and recommended options for a Visitors Center. The consultant team determined that the existing Ramsey House is insufficient to meet the current and future goal of conveying tourist information and that Alexandria needs a Visitors Center of approximately 3,500 square feet.

The consultant team reviewed potential sites and identified potential locations in the City. Each location was analyzed with respect to its positive and negative impacts on residential and commercial activities in the surrounding areas. The report also included recommendations about signage and wayfinding, exploration of changes in public bus service, extension of DASH or free off-peak service and additional detailed parking and traffic evaluations. Motorcoach management through signage and route alternations was also recommended.

After reviewing seven locations, the report ultimately concluded that there were two options for a new Visitors Center location: expanding the Ramsey House or constructing a pair of pavilions on Market Square.

In response to a question about whether the consultants conducted motorcoach counts, Mr. Jinks responded that they did not.

In response to a question about whether the consultant identified specific streets, Mr. Jinks responded that the report does identify specific streets for motorcoach routes.

The full report was received by City Council on June 10, 2003 and is available on-line here >> <http://dockets.alexandriava.gov/fy03/061003rm/di21.pdf>

4. Group Mapping Exercise: Short-term & Long-term Solutions

The Task Force broke into two groups to explore short-term and long-term solutions for routes, drop-off and short-term parking.

The groups were provided oversized “Motorcoach Walking Shed” maps which included streets and a description of uses around each location. The groups were also advised that a GIS “Dynamic Map” was available on the computer screens to analyze specific options with respect to infrastructure (curb radius, presence of parking, street width, aerial photography, etc...) that was not available on the static maps.

The goal of the exercise was to draw specific routes and/or drop-off and parking locations on the map for further study by the Task Force and the City.

Group #1

This group presented the following findings:

Potential Parking Locations:

- Jamison Ave (between Holland and West)
- Off-street commercial property at the corner of St. Asaph and Madison (approximately 717 to 723 N St. Asaph)
- 800 block of N. St. Asaph (between Montgomery and Madison)
- 800 block of N. Fairfax St. (between Montgomery and Madison)

Potential Drop-Off Locations:

- 100 block of N. Lee Street
- Unit block of Duke Street

Potential Routes:

- Washington St. (N and S)
- Pendleton St.
- N. Royal St.
- N. Fairfax St.
- Franklin Street
- S. Union St.

Group #2

This group presented the following findings:

Potential Parking Locations:

- Jamison Ave (between Holland and West)
- Eisenhower Ave. near Bartholomew St.
- 600 Royal Street

Potential Routes:

- Washington St.
- Madison St.
- Pendleton St.
- N. Fairfax St.
- N. Union St.
- S. Union St.
- Strand
- Prince St.
- Duke St.
- King St.

5. Upcoming Meeting Topic Schedule & Legislative Issues (if needed)

The Task Force agreed to meet on Sept. 22 at 7 pm at Market Square (King Street) for a field trip on a motorcoach to review potential parking, drop-off and route locations. The following meeting, October 13, will be reserved for a discussion about Enforcement and Communications.

6. Public & Task Force Q&A (15 minutes)

In response to a question about the ACVA brochure “Motorcoach Rules & Regulations for Historic, Alexandria,” Ms. Brown provided a breakdown of how the brochure is printed and where the funds from parking proceeds are dispersed.

A resident raised a question about trolleys parking at Robinson Terminal and pointed out that this site as a layover area may need to be reexamined in the event of future development.

There being no further comment, the Task Force adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

Meeting Minutes 22 September 2008

The Task Force met at 7 pm on Market Square (300 block of King Street) to travel on a reserved motorcoach. The coach departed at 7:15 pm.

Attendees

Task Force Members: Rob Aronson, Rich Baier (chair), Stephanie Brown, Bert Ely, Mayor William D. Euille, Chief David Baker, Hubert Herre, Ellen Stanton, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Ellen Stanton, Tara Zimnick-Calico, Lorraine Lloyd (staff), David Huchler (staff), Jamie Bartlett (staff), Yon Lambert (staff).

Guests: Ken Presley, Betty Ward, Wellington Watts, Danielle Westphal.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 22 September 2008.

Executive Summary:

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Baier welcomed everyone to the Motorcoach Task Force meeting which was held aboard a motorcoach. The Task Force received a demonstration about handicapped access aboard motorcoaches prior to boarding the bus.

2. Review Minutes & Report Back from Constituent Groups

Because the Task Force did meet in its usual location, the group agreed to table discussion of the Sept. 8 minutes until the next meeting on October 27. Ms. Brown provided a brief update on progress of the ACVA working group.

3. Motorcoach Field Trip: Review Potential Routes, Drop-Off and Parking

The Task Force reviewed potential routes produced in the group mapping exercise portion of the Sept. 8 meeting. A portion of the next meeting on Oct. 27 will be devoted to discussing feedback from the field trip and finalizing the criteria to be used for designated motorcoach routes.

The group reviewed potential short-term parking areas, including Jamison Avenue.

The Task Force also reviewed a portion of a route used by sightseeing motorcoaches and agreed to discuss this route at its next meeting.

4. Upcoming Meeting Topic Schedule & Legislative Issues (if needed)

The Task Force agreed to meet on October 27 at 7 pm in its usual location (City Hall, Room 1101) to review the Sept. 22 meeting and discuss routes, and hear presentations about Enforcement and Communications.

5. Public & Task Force Q&A (15 minutes)

There being no public comments during the trip, the Task Force adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

**Meeting Minutes
27 October 2008
7 pm, City Hall**

Sister Cities conference Room 1101

Attendees

Task Force Members: Rob Aronson, Rich Baier (chair), Bert Ely, Mayor William D. Euille, Chief David Baker, Charlotte Hall, Poul Hertel (new appointee for Old Town Civic Association), Hubert Herre, Ellen Stanton, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Lorraine Lloyd (staff), David Huchler (staff), Jamie Bartlett (staff), Yon Lambert (staff).

Guests: Ken Presley, Joanne Platt, Sarita Schotta, Danielle Westphal.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 27 October 2008.

Executive Summary:

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Baier welcomed everyone to the Motorcoach Task Force meeting.

2. Review Minutes & Report Back from Constituent Groups

The group reviewed minutes from both the September 8 and October 13 meetings and minutes for both meetings were unanimously approved.

Ellen Stanton suggested that when designating routes the group should note data such as street width, turning radius, vertical clearance, lane usage. The group should keep in mind that traffic is cyclical and the Task Force should reflect connection to other initiatives, i.e., Eco-City. Examples: carbon footprints, emissions, walkability, and less use of vehicles. Rich Baier stressed that it would be critical - especially when reporting to Council - to stay data focused and to look at DASH and Metro routes.

Poul Hertel, President of Old Town Civic Association, reported that they had a membership meeting that dealt exclusively with the motor coach issue. A panel consisted of: Chief David Baker (enforcement), Stephanie Brown (tourism), Bert Ely (citizen), Lance Mallamo (historic) and Victor Para (industry). There was a facilitated Q&A session following the presentations. Concerns/solutions could be split in two sections: (1) short term - education efforts and teaching drivers and businesses re rules and regulations; (2) enforcement has been lax and could be improved and could piggyback with education effort.

The meeting input includes some comments that strict criteria should be used to select routes and a better approach may be to identify streets that cannot be used. The attendees wanted to emphasize Old Town as a walkable city. The general feeling is that the buses are too large and there are too many of them. Attendees wanted to limit the size of buses and limit number of buses. The group also proposed a 'bus to trolley' approach. Rich Baier stated that this has been discussed and needed to be a focus as we moved forward. Mr. Baier discussed the jitney proposals, points of destination, use of smaller vehicles, viability of organized loading/unloading, and pedestrian/accessibility issues. Mr. Baier emphasized that the approach of designating streets that were not to be used would be a departure from what the Task Force had previously determined.

3. Review Designated Routes

The Task Force began addressing designated routes by reviewing written comments provided by the Old and Historic District Residents Group. A companion Power Point presentation included references to the existing criteria, DASH routes and entry portals among others.

The group collectively laid out two routes in its previous meeting, which was the trip on the motorcoach. The group also had a discussion of the sightseeing route provided by Betty Ward. There were two primary issues including the windy nature of the route and the overall destinations. The group agreed that sightseeing routes were a different "bucket" than designated routes to parking/drop-off locations and agreed to invite Ms. Ward to address it at the next meeting.

There was some discussion of destination points and the criteria the Task Force has been using to determine gathering points. Most destinations are currently shown on the dynamic GIS map as "Landmarks."

4. Presentation: Alexandria Police Department (Enforcement)

Captain David Huchler made a presentation about Enforcement (short-term and long-term). The following is a summary of primary recommendations and next steps:

Designated routes

Long term

- Once routes are established - properly sign them for voluntary compliance.

Short Term

- Identify areas or locations (e.g. Union Street) where signs could be immediately improved or erected.

Designated Routes re: King Street

Long term

- Turn the unit block of King Street into One Way (west) - permanently.
- Continue funding the additional staffing (2 officers on Fri/Sat night).

Short term

- Continue with our unit block plan - King Street One Way on Fri. and Sat. nights.

Clearly Defined and Posted Loading and Unloading Areas

Long Term

- Identify appropriate load/unload areas based on criteria established by the Task Force. Ensure proper signage and direction to these areas.

Short Term

- Identify current Loading/Unloading areas and improve the signage.

Enforcement

Long term

- Increased fines - capture enforcement information for performance measuring and identification of problem areas.
- Coordinate with State Police.

Short term

- Continue current efforts.

Communication

- Ensure that the police department is involved in the short term and long term planning/education and dissemination of information. It is important that the police department is regarded as a partner in these issues from start to finish.

5. Presentation: ACVA and Alexandria Office of Communications (Communication/Education)

Alexandria Communications Director Tony Castrilli made a presentation about the City's communication strategies with respect to motorcoaches. The Office of Communications proposes to work in partnership with the Motorcoach Task Force to communicate important messages to residents, City employees, and the media about Task Force decisions and City policies regarding operation of motorcoaches in the Old Town community.

Objectives:

- Keep residents informed about new motorcoach-related developments and policies
- Help City staff to become familiar with and knowledgeable about motorcoach policies and procedures
- Work with Transportation and Environmental Services to promote motorcoach-related resources and policies for Alexandria residents (such as a call-in number for reporting motorcoach violations, etc.)

Method:

- Work in partnership with the Motorcoach Task Force to develop short- and long-term communications strategies using a combination of electronic, print, and broadcast tools, augmented with media relations and other professional services.

Electronic Tools

- City Web Site (alexandriava.gov): Web Boxes, Special Web Features, Video/Audio Podcasts
- E-News: Electronic message service, offered by subscription, to 3,000+ City residents

Print Tools

- *FYI Alexandria* (resident newsletter, circulation 69,000+)
- *CityNews* (employee newspaper, circulation approximately 3,000)
- Press Releases
- Posters, brochures, and related materials
- Paid advertising in local newspapers (Gazette, Times, Washington Post Alexandria/Arlington Weekly)

Broadcast Tools

- City of Alexandria Cable Channel 70
- Comcast Local Access Channels

Professional Services provided by the Office of Communications

- Media Relations/Media Strategy Development
- Project Management
- Event Coordination and Promotion
- Graphic Design and Web Development
- Editorial Services and Content Development

Short Term Marketing/Communications Campaign (March - June 2009):

Develop a short-term, informational campaign incorporating

- Web Special Feature page
- Press Release/E-news
- Podcasts
- FYI and CityNews Articles
- Cable Channel 70 and community cable access show coverage
- Pitching stories to local media
- Motorcoach Hotline for residents
- Brochure and/or flyers \$

Costs: Printing and copying of flyers, posters

Long-Term Marketing/Communications Campaign (FY 2010)

Develop a long-term, comprehensive, branded campaign targeting City residents and business community, featuring products mentioned above, plus

- Long-term media strategy development
- "Motorcoach Task Force" E-news subscription list
- associated print, video, and audio products \$
- paid advertising in local press and on cable \$
- Coordination and promotion of community meetings and events\$

Costs: Printing/copying of flyers, posters, and brochures; paid advertising in local press and on cable; and coordination of community meetings and events

In a second presentation, Lorraine Lloyd, Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association vice-president of sales, explained that the ACVA has been tasked with communicating the Motorcoach Task Force Recommendations and Guidelines to the industry. The ACVA will enhance current communication activities and develop a public relations plan to include the following short term and on-going activities:

- I. Enhancement of current print and electronic communication tools:
 - www.visitalexandriava.com - new site to launch early November 2008
 - Development of *Driver Information Micro Site* to include: rules, regulations, enforcement, interactive mapping tool, directions from north and south, where to eat and where to stay
 - Professional re-design and print of ACVA Motorcoach brochure
 - *Access Alexandria Group Tours* (ACVA Quarterly Tour & Travel E-newsletter)

- II. Educate local and regional businesses to insure effective motorcoach management
- Alexandria constituent groups working with the motorcoach industry for leisure and corporate related groups to include hotels, restaurants, cultural and historic sites, tourist attractions and service providers, etc; regional Destination Management Companies (DMOs) working with our businesses
 - Provide information and tools to disseminate to clientele when booking group business: Motorcoach Task Force Guidelines, revised Motorcoach brochure (print and electronic), requested link on business website to www.visitalexandriava.com and required informational verbiage for client contracts and agreements
 - Communicate findings and educate constituents through: ACVA Tourism Marketing Forum, hotel sales meetings, personal meetings with appropriate businesses and Old Town Business & Professional Association
- III. Develop media and public relations schedule to reach the following:
- Trade Association media - enhance current ACVA list of media (print and electronic) to reach the tour industry through communications with the primary trade associations to include:
 - United Motorcoach Association: *The Intelligence* (monthly e-newsletter), *Bus & Motorcoach New* (bi-monthly newsletter), Email & Fax Alerts, UMA.org
 - American Bus Association: Buses.org/Operator Trip Planning, *ABA in the News*, *ABA Insider*
 - National Tour Association: NTAOnline.com, *Courier Magazine*
 - The Guild of Professional Tour Guides of Washington D.C.
 - Additional organizations include: International Motorcoach Association, Greater N.J. Motorcoach Association, Student Youth Tour Association, United States Tour Operators Association, Maryland Motorcoach Association, Virginia Motorcoach Association, GLAMER, Pennsylvania Bus Association, Ohio Travel Association, Virginia Tourism Corporation, Destination DC
 - Independent print and electronic trade media not affiliated with trade associations to include such publications as: Group Travel Leader, Travel Trade, Group Travel Leader, Going on Faith Travel Trade, Byways Magazine, Bus Tours Magazine, Senior Group Travel Magazine and Virginia Group Travel Magazine
- IV. Attendance at appropriate tour and travel tradeshows to include: American Bus Association 2009 - 2010, United Motorcoach Expo (tentative); partner representation at individual shows.

6. Upcoming Meeting Topic Schedule & Legislative Issues

The Task Force will next meet on November 10 at 7 pm.

7. Public & Task Force Q&A

Rob Aronson asked about an endgame for the Task Force. A conversation ensued about designated routes and the primary issues list previously agreed to by the Task Force.

Mrs. Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet provided copies of a matrix and encouraged the Task Force to create a matrix of its own (A copy of the existing, DRAFT Task Force matrix was provided.) Ms. Crenshaw Van Fleet said the Task Force was leaving important issues out of the discussion.

Mr. Townsend Van Fleet said that he did not agree that the City was unable to enforce designated routes, opposed a designated route on King Street and said that the residents pay taxes and should be the first people served.

Councilman Paul Smedberg urged the Task Force to address short-term issues with a vision to long-term solutions. Several task force members commented that long-term options needed to be more fully discussed and the Task Force agreed to do so at its next meeting.

There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

Meeting Minutes
10 November 2008
7 pm, City Hall
Sister Cities Conference Room 1101

Attendees

Task Force Members: Rob Aronson, Rich Baier (chair), Stephanie Brown, Bert Ely, Nick Gregory (new appointee for Alexandria Chamber of Commerce), Charlotte Hall, Poul Hertel, Hubert Herre, Greg Ogden, Ellen Stanton, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Lorraine Lloyd (staff), Jamie Bartlett (staff), Yon Lambert (staff).

Guests: Van Van Fleet, Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet, Betty Ward, Wellington Watts, Ken Presley, Carolyn Cooper.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 10 November 2008.

Executive Summary:

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Baier welcomed everyone to the Motorcoach Task Force meeting.

2. Review Minutes & Report Back from Constituent Groups

The group reviewed minutes from the October 27 meeting which were unanimously approved.

Greg Ogden reported that North Old Town Independent Citizens (NOTIC) has received updates and has no significant difficulties with the Task Force progress. NOTIC is in accord with the Old Town Civic Association statements on motorcoaches.

Rob Aronson reported that citizens he spoke with remain opposed to motorcoach routes, particularly those that would concentrate traffic.

Poul Hertel reviewed the Old Town Civic Association statement of concerns and solutions proposed by membership. (This document is available in the October 27 meeting materials on-line at >> ww.alexandriava.gov/motorcoach). OTC emphasized the four solutions at the end of the document.

Rich Baier reviewed with the group the issue of whether to create a subcommittee to review routes. After further consideration it was determined that a subcommittee was not warranted and none was created.

3. Review Issue #1: Lack of designated routes puts coaches on sensitive streets/safety (short-term)

Using printed map handouts and the GIS viewer, staff reviewed the current proposals for motorcoach routes with the Task Force members. The Task Force reviewed the routes proposed on September 8 by Group A and Group B as well as Option C and Option D. Option C and Option D include route options that have come up since the initial meeting to review potential routes.

Staff clarified that routes are being considered with an eye to long-term solutions. Routes are intended as an initial step in a larger motorcoach management strategy. Staff explained that although different options exist for routes, the review of routes is not intended to necessarily identify a “best” route or only one option. The routes are not mutually exclusive and Task Force input was requested to determine whether any streets should be removed from consideration.

The group also discussed the issue of different trip types or “buckets.” Currently, the group is considering how to address three different trip types: (1) Sightseeing, (2) Drop-Off/Parking and (3) Hotel/Attraction access.

Staff provided an 11x17 sheet that summarized the existing conditions based on the 12 different criteria developed for streets under consideration as routes. (The summary and route options are available under the November 10 meeting minutes on-line here >> www.alexandriava.gov/motorcoach)

The group had the following primary recommendations:

- An option may need to exist to use Duke Street only west of Route 1
- Loading and unloading at Christ Church on Washington Street is a good location. Safety concerns remain and there may be operational concerns and conflicts with rush hour, but ACVA and several residents supported expanding drop-off and parking in this location.
- Option D (a single route confined only to King Street) was not practical and should be removed from consideration. King Street may be included as one option but it should not be the sole route in Old Town.

4. Long-Term Action Items (Group Discussion)

After the discussion of routes, the Task Force provided a list of items that should be considered for discussion as Long-Term Action Items at its next meeting. The Long Term Action Items for discussion include:

- Parking
- Central Transfer Point (thorough explanation of process to include schedule and process)

- OTCA Executive Board “Statement of Constraints”
- Permitting
- Refining “Buckets” (ie Motorcoach Trip Types)
- Discouraging Vehicles and Encouraging Walking Tours
- OTCA Letter & Points
- Chapter 7 of Old & Historic District Residents Group

5. Presentation: Alexandria Footsteps to the Past/Sightseeing Routes

Betty Ward of Alexandria Footsteps to the Past made a presentation on sightseeing routes. An outline of the presentation is available under the November 10 meeting on-line here >> www.alexandriava.gov/motorcoach)

6. Upcoming Meeting Topic Schedule & Legislative Issues

The Task Force agreed that a verbal presentation to Council in December would be important.

The Task Force agreed to schedule a community meeting in December or January to present its findings with respect to routes. The Task Force also agreed that it tentatively planned to provide a report to City Council for action in February.

Rich Bair is scheduled to attend the Old Town Civic Association on January 14 to provide an update.

Responding to a question by Bert Ely, the group agreed that it did not plan to make a submission to the city’s legislative package for 2009. There were no other legislative issues to discuss.

7. Public & Task Force Q&A (15 minutes)

Julie Van Fleet said that while Mr. Euille said at a previous task force meeting that the civic groups near the current WMATA barn do not want a Motorcoach depot there, she does not believe that he actually talked to any of the civic groups there. She also said that she doubted that Mr. Euille had said anything to them that a Motorcoach depot would be nicer and not a disruption to their neighborhood like the current bus barn. The task force should consider the purchase and adaptive reuse of the WAMATA bus barn to Motorcoach and Motorcoach driver use.

There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned.

**Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force
Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2008
City Hall, Room 1101**

Attendees

Task Force Members: Rob Aronson, Rich Baier (chair), Stephanie Brown, Bert Ely, Mayor Bill Euille, Nick Gregory, Charlotte Hall, Poul Hertel, Hubert Herre, Valerie Ianieri, Greg Ogden, Ellen Stanton, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Tara Zimnick-Calico. Staff: Jesse Harman (Alexandria Police Department), Yon Lambert (T&ES).

Guests: Van Van Fleet, Joanne Platt, Victor Parra.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Baier welcomed everyone to the Motorcoach Task Force meeting and reviewed the topics of the evening.

2. Review Minutes & Report Back from Constituent Groups

Mr. Baier reviewed the minutes of the November 10 meeting and asked for comments. An amendment was discussed and adopted. The minutes were adopted by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Baier reported on presentations for the Chamber of Commerce and City Council.

3. Framework for Motorcoach Management

Mr. Baier spoke of the need to bring task to conclusion and introduced Yon Lambert with the request that questions be held until after the presentation.

Mr. Lambert reviewed the framework for motorcoach management presentation and took questions from the Task Force upon concluding.

Mr. Ely asked whether it would be possible to design a website by spring.

Mr. Hertel asked whether the motorcoach industry representatives would be willing to accompany the City to Richmond when the time came to amend the state code. Mr. Parra, a guest from the United Motorcoach Association, indicated that they would work with the City.

Mr. Parra indicated that they may have concerns about accessibility. Mr. Baier said he was familiar with ADA requirements and that a motorcoach company's responsibility is to provide accessible transportation for all.

The Task Force had some discussion about making the Unit Block of King Street one-way westbound and it was determined that this would be a primary recommendation.

4. Upcoming Meeting Topic Schedule & Legislative Issues

The Task Force established the following schedule:

December 19	DRAFT staff report to be provided by City Staff
January 6-9	Comments due from Task Force. Comments can be accepted until 5 pm on Friday, Jan. 9 to be included in time for Jan. 12 meeting DRAFT review.
January 12	Regular Task Force meeting
January 26	Community meeting (Lyles-Crouch, 7 pm)
February 2	Regular Task Force meeting & final review of report
February 4 24	City Council (date amended to February 24)

5. Public & Task Force Q&A (15 minutes)

There being no comments, the Task Force adjourned.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

**Meeting Minutes
12 January 2009
City Hall, Room 1101**

Attendees

Task Force Members: Mayor William D. Euille, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Rich Baier (Chair), Stephanie Brown, Bert Ely, Nick Gregory, Charlotte Hall, Poul Hertel, Hubert Herre, Valerie Ianeri, Greg Ogden, Cleveland Spruill (for Chief David Baker), Ellen Stanton, Tara Zimnick-Calico, Lorraine Lloyd (staff) and Yon Lambert (staff).

Guests: Van Van Fleet, Wellington Watts, Betty Ward, Carolyn Cooper

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on January 12, 2009.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Baier welcomed everyone to the Motorcoach Task Force meeting and reviewed the topics of the evening.

2. Review Minutes & Report Back from Constituent Groups

Mayor Euille wished everyone a Happy New Year and reiterated the timetable discussed at the December 8th meeting regarding the need to bring closure to the work of the Task Force and to make a formal recommendation to the City Council and move on. He thanked everyone for their hard work and input and reminded the group there will never be a 100% general consensus and that the spring tourism season is near. The Mayor said that in July 2008 the agenda was to look at the staff report as being short-term and long-term issues. He stated in the short term, the Task Force has to come to some consensus in order to bring forward long-term recommendations. Councilman Smedberg agreed with the Mayor and said that in the eyes of many, the problem is going to get worse unless some short-term recommendations are made to begin allowing the City to manage motorcoaches.

Chair Rich Baier asked if there were any comments regarding the December 8th minutes. He then asked for a motion to approve, amend, strike any part of the minutes or staff report. Mr. Baier stated if anyone had anything they wanted to make changes on it would be discussed at the end of the meeting.

3. Review DRAFT Staff Report

Mr. Baier reiterated the need to finalize recommendations. He explained that the Task Force Charter says there must be balance among all the components of this proposed system because tourism is vital to the City and must be carefully considered how it works with the fabric of Old Town and the City. Mr. Baier said that the framework revolves around a fee-based registration that will be voluntary initially, but in full effect within 3 years. During that voluntary period, the system can be perfected. Mr. Baier said that both the industry and citizens have said that regulations are warranted. However, businesses, residents and the police need to know the rules of the regulations to ensure enforcement.

Mr. Baier said that the short-term focus will be on items not requiring regulatory authority from Richmond in the areas of enforcement, communication and education. A registration and voluntary permit system can be designed for on-line access. Coordination and regulation is needed by an advisory group comprised of residents, industry, businesses and City staff as counsel. Data collection by staff is also a necessity to know the numbers of motorcoach visits, their point of entry and exit, trip types, and size. Designated routes and additional parking locations were discussed. Mr. Baier also said that the criteria used to select which streets could be designated were outlined in the report. However, the motorcoach designated route summary recommendations on pages 33-34 are listed for informational purposes and it must be clarified in the report that these are not the final recommendations of the Task Force.

Summary of Primary Issues & Questions Raised by Task Force in Review

A) Acquisition of Regulatory Authority and Process: There was some discussion about how soon the City could acquire regulatory authority to regulate motorcoaches. Several Task Force members said that the group should recommend an earlier target, possibly the 2010 General Assembly. A target was not agreed to. However, it was agreed that the Task Force needed to make a recommendation about this issue and the general framework for the long-term process. Several Task Force members, including Old Town Civic representatives, said that the Staff Report must contain a strong commitment to this process.

B) Fees: There were questions about the legality of fees which are still unanswered but will be addressed at a future meeting.

C) Vehicle size: There are still questions about the City's ability - or lack thereof - to regulate the type and size of vehicles on roadways. Staff explained that the City can regulate vehicles that are oversized, over tonnage or if the structural composition of the roadway cannot support a certain vehicle type. State Code 46.2-901 regulates vehicle heights, widths, lengths, etc. Section 1104 address issues that localities may be able to address. Some members of the Task Force believe that the City should say that in the long-term, no standard buses will be allowed east of Washington Street. However, there was little consensus on this point. It was agreed that the issue of size would be discussed and reviewed in the context of a long-term recommendation at the February 2 meeting.

*[**Staff has requested that a representative from the City Attorney's office meet with the Task Force on February 2 to discuss items A, B and C above.]*

D) Designated routes: Members of the Task Force questioned the criteria used to recommend routes and expressed concern that many of the streets in Old Town east of Washington Street were similar and it was not easily understood how some streets were considered. The Task Force agreed that ultimately the system must disperse buses onto one of multiple designated routes. More discussion is needed regarding the final recommendations.

E) Advisory/oversight group: There was uncertainty as to the composition and role of this body as outlined in the Task Force recommendations. Several Task Force members said they believed that the Task Force should become the advisory body. Others said that the advisory group should be staff only. The Task Force discussed - but did not agree - that there may need to be two groups: #1- An initial, smaller workgroup to create a detailed management plan that would make its final recommendations to this body. #2- A standing advisory group or tourism board modeled on some other cities that could provide long-term monitoring. It was agreed that the makeup of the advisory body would be discussed at the February 2 meeting.

F) Types of vehicles and size: Members of the Task Force said that the report needed more clarity on its definition of a motorcoach. For instance, school buses that are not serving Alexandria schools should be included. Additionally, the Task Force agreed that some effort to "right-size" vehicles for their trip type must be made. The Task Force agreed that it was appropriate to begin this effort.

The Task Force revised draft recommendations and ultimately agreed to the following language for its short-term recommendations:

1. Appoint a workgroup/advisory committee to oversee the future management of motorcoach operations in the City.
2. Instruct staff to conduct counts of motorcoach operations in Alexandria from March through June.
 - o A longer-term goal will be to implement an on-line motorcoach registration system by March 2010 to include fees and daily limitations on certain types of motorcoach trips.
3. Permanently designate the unit block of King Street one-way westbound and The Strand (between Wales Alley and King Street) one-way northbound to allow for safer traffic flow and provide better motorcoach management.
4. Designate the south side of Jamieson Avenue between Holland Lane and South West Street as short-term (2 hour) motorcoach parking with limited hours and seasonality. Spaces on Jamieson Avenue will provide new short-term motorcoach parking in addition to existing short-term parking on the 500 block of North Union Street (4-5 spaces) and on the 900 block of North St. Asaph Street (3 spaces).
5. Designate new 30-minute parking spaces in the following locations:
 - o Two spaces at 112-118 North Washington Street
 - o Two spaces at 110-112 South Washington Street
6. Instruct the Alexandria Police Department to more aggressively enforce existing city ordinances with respect to motorcoach traffic and collect/report data related to motorcoach violations.
7. Continue funding the Alexandria Police Department in its motorcoach management efforts on the unit block of King Street.

Staff agreed to the following action items:

- Revised language of recommendations would be provided to TF members and at future public meetings
- Changes as discussed at the meeting will be made to the staff report, and the next version will include a cover letter and 1-2 page executive summary
- Changes would be made to the report to better reflect residential issues
- All comments submitted by residents and TF members would be circulated and posted on-line and included as addendums to the report
- A future meeting would include more discussion about the legality of regulation and the long-term process for acquiring authority
- Staff would discuss independently with TF members to determine who might be able to serve on a working group and/or advisory body

4. Upcoming Meeting Topic Schedule & Legislative Issues

The Task Force established the following schedule:

January 26	Community meeting (Lyles-Crouch, 7 pm)
February 2	Task Force meeting— Long-Term Recommendations
February 9	Task Force meeting— Long-Term Recommendations & Final Report review prior to City Council meeting
February 24	City Council

5. Public & Task Force Q&A

There being no comments, the Task Force adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

Community Meeting Review 26 January 2009 Lyles Crouch Elementary School

Attendees

Task Force Members: Councilman Paul Smedberg, Stephanie Brown, Bert Ely, Charlotte Hall, Poul Hertel, Greg Ogden, Cleveland Spruill (for Chief David Baker), Ellen Stanton, Tara Zimmick-Calico, Lorraine Lloyd (staff) and Yon Lambert (staff).

Guests: William Barton, Douglas Thurman, Agnes and Engin Artemel, Nathan Macek, Jim Mackay (OHA), Lance Mallamo (OHA), Jerry Lepisko, Tim Elliott, Doug Guiler, Susan Pettey, Gail and Alan McCurry, Susan and Tad Lipsky, Monica and Bob Bell, Sarita and Charles Schotta, Van Van Fleet.

Yon Lambert, Principal Transportation Planner for the City of Alexandria, welcomed everyone to the Lyles Crouch Community Meeting of the Motorcoach Task Force. The group was shown a presentation that included background information concerning the Task Force, its charter and mission, key issues, long and short term recommendations, and the proposed 2010 framework. Also revealed to the group was the remaining meeting schedule of the Task Force, the task of agreeing to the language in the staff report and subsequent City Council hearing on February 24, 2009.

Public & Task Force Q & A

Members of the Task Force and City residents asked questions including:

Q: Why is “Encouraging Walking Tours” a long-term recommendation and not a short-term?

A: The City and its partners already encourage walking tours and will continue to do so in the short-term. However, the bullet “Encouraging Walking Tours” that was included in the PowerPoint presentation as a Long-Term *Issue* was intended to reflect a more active role by the City when working with local touring companies and is not included in any recommendations.

Q: Why haven’t there been motorcoach counts before now?

A: The City has not had the capacity or funding to pursue counts specific to motorcoaches.

- Q:** How can there be designated routes for motorcoaches considering most operators arrive prepared with an itinerary of the attractions planned during their tour?
- A:** A goal would be for the itinerary to include designated routes; operators would no longer be allowed to deviate from routes and the capacity to “tour” using a full-size motorcoach would be severely restricted. The goal would be to designate routes to hotels, parking/loading/unloading areas east of Washington Street and to disperse the buses across the entire street grid to reduce impacts on residents.
- Q:** The 900 block of South Royal Street can be used to park 10-12 buses. Has it been considered for motorcoach short-term parking?
- A:** It was studied in a previous motorcoach effort but has not been considered by this Task Force. The location could be considered in the future.
- Q:** Will City Council see the staff report for the first time on February 24th?
- A:** Mayor Bill Euille and Councilman Paul Smedberg are on the Task Force. However, the full Council has not yet considered any recommendations.
- Q:** Why can nothing happen until 2010 and not 2009?
- A:** The goal of the Task Force is to implement short-term (no- or low-cost) actions and policies immediately. However, some short-term actions will require that Council appropriate new funding.
- Q:** Why does Alexandria need permission from Richmond to regulate the motorcoach tourism in Alexandria?
- A:** Due to a rule of law known as the Dillon Rule. It is the standard used by state and local courts that established that a state legislature has complete control of municipal governments.
- Q:** Some tours begin too early in the day. Can their hours of operation be enforced?
- A:** Yes, the Task Force is proposing to limit tours to certain hours of operation.
- Q:** 10-20 Martz buses pass through Alexandria coming from Washington, DC and traveling to Mt. Vernon. Can we just ask tour bus companies for reports on the number of buses they send to or through Alexandria?
- A:** Martz is only one company; there are hundreds of companies including many small firms that provide motorcoach transportation.
- Q:** Who will pay for the tour bus counts?
- A:** The City will pay for the counts.
- Q:** Construction trucks drive through Old Town and do not hit cars. Why do the tour buses hit cars, damage curbs and trees?
- A:** Deputy Chief Spruill was not aware of such accident reports. If these accidents are occurring, they should be reported to the Police Department.

- Q:** Who designates what routes public transportation takes?
A: Routes are proposed by DASH and/or MetroBus and are considered in a community process.
- Q:** Do we know how much revenue is generated by motorcoach tourism?
A: It is not clear.
- Q:** How many buses travel through the City?
A: The goal is to count the motorcoaches in spring 2009.

Statements

Members of the Task Force and City residents made the following statements:

- Old Dominion Boat Club represented they do not want to block The Strand and do not support changing the portion of King Street near The Strand as a one-way street.
- Restaurants are not directing buses and should be incorporated into the process.
- Idling laws should be changed to that of DC, which has a 3 minute limit.
- OHA representative stated that creative walking tours can be created.
- ACVA representative stated they support a system of managing motorcoaches and indicated that parking is needed and access to restaurants is necessary. AVCA noted that the City should quantify its infrastructure demands regarding tour buses.
- It was noted that accommodations should be provided for tourists that are elderly and/or handicapped and thus could not participate in all walking tours.
- Restaurant staff should meet buses and give their customers the rules for motorcoach drivers.
- Cleveland Spruill of the Alexandria Police Department said police will strictly enforce prolonged idling of tour buses during upcoming tourism season. Funding provided to the police department will enable a stronger police force during the tourism season.
- Lance Mallamo of OHA said that museums are willing to design walking tours and support the Task Force goals/recommendations.

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

Meeting Minutes
5 February 2009
City Hall, Room 3008

Attendees

Task Force Members: Councilman Paul Smedberg, Rich Baier (Chair), Rob Aronson, Stephanie Brown, Bert Ely, Nick Gregory, Charlotte Hall, Poul Hertel, Hubert Herre, Greg Ogden, Cleveland Spruill (for Chief David Baker), Ellen Stanton, Tara Zimnick-Calico, Lorraine Lloyd (staff), Karen Callaham (staff) and Yon Lambert (staff).

Guests: Van Van Fleet, Christopher Spera (Assistant City Attorney), Charles and Sarita Schotta, Andrea Stowers, Julie Crenshaw-Van Fleet.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on February 5, 2009.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Baier welcomed everyone to the Motorcoach Task Force meeting and reviewed the topics of the evening.

2. Review Minutes & Report Back from Constituent Groups

Mr. Aronson inquired about the language in number 3d of the January 12 minutes regarding "Designated Routes." After discussion and a show of hands, (12 yeas) the second to the last sentence in 3d was revised to say: *"The majority of the Task Force agreed that ultimately the system must disperse buses onto multiple streets and include caps for trip types as a long-term measure (1-2 years after data collection)."*

Mr. Hertel requested a change in 3e of the minutes to read *"Others said that the advisory group should not include staff."*

Mr. Aronson questioned numbers 5 and 7 of the Task Force short-term recommendations. Recommendation #5 refers to the new 30-minute tour bus parking locations on North and South Washington St. Recommendation #7 refers to the continuance of funding for the Police Department geared toward traffic management on the Unit Block of King St. Deputy Chief Cleveland Spruill clarified that the Department was allocated \$80,000 towards overtime pay for police in their efforts to manage motorcoach activity in Old Town.

Mr. Lambert provided copies of the CD of the second draft of the Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force recommendations to be discussed during the groups' next meeting on February 9th. The discussions during the February 9th meeting will produce a third and final draft of the recommendations. He asked that comments to the draft be e-mailed to him.

Chairman Rich Baier asked for a motion to vote on the minutes of January 12th. Stephanie Brown added she would like the record to reflect that hotels in the City of Alexandria contribute \$20 million to City revenues. A motion to approve the January 12th minutes was made and unanimously approved.

The Chairman asked for any comments on the notes of the January 26th Community Meeting held at Lyles Crouch. There was some discussion on the Old Dominion Boat Club request but no changes were made. The notes were unanimously approved.

The Task Force reviewed the notes of the Old Town Civic Association meeting held at the Lyceum. The Chairman reminded the group that this particular meeting was not an official Task Force meeting.

3. Long-Term Issues: Legal & Management Process

Interim City Attorney Christopher Spera informed the group that should City Council approve an effort to regulate tour buses, challenges should be anticipated based on federal and state laws. From the federal perspective, the primary concern is Title 49 of the Interstate Transportation Act and this refers exclusively to transportation trips - not touring.

Mr. Spera said the primary State code reference is 46.2-1304 and if Alexandria chooses to regulate motorcoaches it must either: (1) Ask the General Assembly to amend 46.2-1304 to include Alexandria among the list of cities that can regulate the industry and/or (2) ask for an exception through a charter amendment.

Charter Amendments

Mr. Spera told the group that the city charter is a grant of power from the General Assembly as to what a City can and cannot do. Certain requests can be granted to a City by the General Assembly to deviate or be exempt from provisions of the State laws that generally apply, which has been done previously. The City's Legislative Director will provide guidance on the feasibility and likelihood of adoption for a charter amendment with respect to motorcoach management at the appropriate time.

Provisions in the 1100 series of Title 46.2 address the limitations for jurisdictions to regulate what is different from what the State law requires. For example the City Code states that 40 feet is the maximum length and the State Code states the maximum length is 45 feet. The State Code reference nullifies the local regulation making it unenforceable without a charter amendment expressly granting Alexandria the authority to address this issue.

Due Process

Task Force members have questioned whether regulating motorcoaches is a due process argument. However, Mr. Spera said due process applies to property owners and this is not a situation where due process applies.

Zoning Ordinance/Commerce vs. Commercial Activity

The notion that the City's Zoning Ordinance is relevant to the tour buses driving on City streets is not historically what the zoning ordinance is used for. It is used to address individual property owner use.

Task Force members have also questioned whether the zoning ordinance may be used to address buses engaging in commercial activity in a residential zone. However, that is not what the City's Zoning Ordinance is intended to regulate. Extensive commercial activity occurs in residential neighborhoods (for example, FedEx is commerce). The fact that someone is making money on tour buses doesn't make the activity run afoul of the Zoning Ordinance. Thus, the Zoning Ordinance cannot regulate bus traffic. It must be through "police power" and exercised in a way that satisfies State code and Federal interstate commerce laws.

Recommendation

The City Attorney believes a charter amendment may provide the best tool for the City to craft the specific language it desires.

A change to §46.2-1304 would be important but the existing language is relatively broad. It says, "may regulate," which is generic and can have both positive and negative implications. (In answer to a Task Force question, the City Attorney reports zero cases of litigation regarding §46.2-1304.) It is important to consider that many of the cities that do regulate tour buses also provide benefits for the buses such as hospitality centers, ample parking, lounges for the drivers, manned 24-hour phone numbers, etc... They have given the industry incentives which may make it less likely to challenge the regulations.

Alexandria must be careful to avoid the appearance that we are only imposing limitations and no benefits. Regulation should be one part of the City's overall business approach for motorcoach transportation.

Federal Law: Transportation vs. Tour Trips.

Mr. Spera said that whatever regulatory scheme the City adopts must be defensible. It must be done in a way that is cognizant of the fact that even if the City is given dispensation from the State through inclusion of the City in 46.2-1304 or by a charter amendment, there is still the issue of Federal Law. If an individual carrier is unhappy with the City's regulation, the motorcoach industry may address this through lobbying. Mr. Spera said that a regulatory scheme must address the Federal law head on and avoid regulating transportation trips.

Mr. Spera's interpretation is that a transportation trip has a particular destination in the City with a final destination that involves loading/unloading/parking in the right-of-way or on private property.

For instance, if City tries to impose a fee on tour buses going to hotels, we will likely run afoul of the Federal prohibition against local regulation of bus transportation. If on the other hand the City is trying to regulate buses that putter around looking at historic places in the City - that may be different. The motorcoach industry will have a difficult time supporting the argument that this type of trip constitutes interstate commerce. That is a locally-based activity on local streets. Congestion, pollution, and the number of people in the public right-of-way are traditionally issues the police power is used to regulate.

Proposed Management Framework Based on Legal Background

Upon conclusion of Mr. Spera's presentation, Mr. Lambert introduced two charts: (1) A proposed timeline for acquiring regulatory authority and (2) A proposed management framework for different motorcoach trip types. The charts are intended to be added to the recommendations report after discussion and Task Force approval.

The timeline is on the following page:

2009

March-June: Pending City Council approval of Task Force short-term recommendations, count motorcoaches.

March-June: Request that Alexandria touring companies revise existing routes used for step-on sightseeing tours.

March-June: Revise/reprint existing brochure and update existing website.

November: Initial DRAFT of on-line registration/managed dispersal system available for review.

2010:

March: Debut fee-based on-line registration/managed dispersal system.

September: Review 1st season of system & routes with Task Force.

September: Draft city proposal for the 2011 General Assembly to amend §46.2-1304 and/or the City Charter.

2011

March-June: Implement touring and/or parking fees

September: If §46.2-1304 is successfully revised and/or the charter is amended to allow the City regulate the route, size, length, etc. of motorcoaches on certain streets, then consider potential City Code changes to impose such restrictions.

Thus, by spring of 2012, the City may be able to legally manage the four motorcoach trip types. If the City is not successful with a proposed charter amendment or amendment to 46.2-1304, the City can try to gain regulatory authority in subsequent years.

The Task Force also reviewed a slide reviewing management strategies for the different trip types (or “buckets”) and raised the following general concerns:

- Task Force members expressed concern that the proposed framework was penalizing businesses east of Washington Street, especially those that “do the right thing” by managing buses via an informal registration system
- Task Force members discussed whether a “bucket” should be added to the framework to address motorcoaches with reservations

Ultimately, the Task Force chose to merely change the chart to change Bucket #1 to “Reservations” and Bucket #2 to “Non-Reservations.”

4. Long-Term Issues: Composition of Workgroup/Advisory Committee

The Task Force discussed its short-term recommendation #1 regarding the appointment of a workgroup or advisory/committee to oversee future motorcoach management operations. The Task Force also discussed whether to add additional representation.

Several Task Force members said that a new body based on the Charleston, SC tourism commission was unnecessary. There was concern that a new group would need to re-learn the issues addressed by the Task Force. Moreover, there was concern that if it added additional representatives the Task Force would become too large and/or unbalanced.

Mr. Baier suggested that the Task Force re-word recommendation #1 to reflect that the Task Force issues need continuity and that the Task Force itself will be re-convened in the future. In the interim, Task Force members will be provided with updates on staff progress.

5. Public & Task Force Q&A

The last meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for Monday, February 9. The purpose of the February 9 meeting is to review the Task Force comments on the second draft of the short-term recommendations.

The report containing the short-term recommendations will be submitted to City Council on February 24. The Task Force was reminded that City Council initially receives reports for the record and then schedules a public hearing.

Julie Crenshaw-Van Fleet requested that the City Attorney's office review state code sections 15-2283, 15-2200 and 46.2-1304.

There being no comments, the Task Force adjourned.

****These minutes are DRAFT and have not been approved by the Task Force.**

Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force

**Meeting Minutes
9 February 2009
Sister City Room, Room 1101, City Hall**

Attendees

Task Force Members: Mayor William Euille, Councilman Paul Smedberg, Rob Aronson, Stephanie Brown, Nick Gregory, Poul Hertel, Greg Ogden, Bert Ely, Charlotte Hall, Hubert Herre, Ellen Stanton, Tara Zimmick-Calico, Lorraine Lloyd (staff), Chief David Baker (staff), Yon Lambert (staff), Karen Callaham (staff)

Guests: William Bartow, Andrea Stowers.

Below is a summary of the City of Alexandria's Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force meeting conducted on 9 February 2009.

Executive Summary: The primary meeting topic was to review the Task Force comments on the second draft of the short-term recommendations.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Smedberg opened the meeting and asked the Task Force members to provide introductions. He then reviewed the agenda and reminded the group that the Task Force was focusing on comments to the second draft of the Task Force recommendations.

2. Review Minutes (February 5) & Report Back from Constituent Groups

Charlotte Hall requested that Joanne Platt be added as a guest at the February 5th meeting.

There was also a recommendation to change bucket #1 by adding motorcoaches with "group" reservations. The Task Force members unanimously agreed.

Poul Hertel questioned the group's discussion regarding dispersal under Item #2 of the February 5 minutes. Yon Lambert stated the text reflects what was discussed at the meeting.

Mr. Hertel asked whether the Feb. 5 minutes should be amended to reflect the premature ending of the meeting and closing of public comment. It was agreed that on Feb. 5 a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Stephanie Brown asked for clarification of Mr. Spera's conversation regarding federal law. Ms. Brown asked whether the group added the distinction of private property after Mr. Spera's presentation. Mr. Smedberg clarified the City Attorney opinion and referred the Task Force to the legal memo. Mr. Smedberg said it was not an absolute statement by Mr. Spera that he stated how the legislature or an attorney in litigation would look at any potential proposal brought forward.

Mr. Hertel asked if the minutes reflected the comments of how other jurisdictions may have commented on the benefits to the industry from their limited restricted sizes of buses. Mr. Lambert directed the Task Force to the last paragraph of page 3 of the Feb. 5 minutes.

Mr. Smedberg inquired if there were additional recommended changes to the minutes. There being none, a motion to approve was solicited and seconded by Greg Ogden. All Task Force members agreed and the minutes were approved.

3. Short-Term Recommendations Report Final Review

Mr. Smedberg stated the cover letter and the draft of the memo being sent to the Mayor and City Council with the report are different documents. Mr. Lambert pointed out only minor changes were made in the cover letter and the recommendation report: In the 5th paragraph of the cover letter to reflect there were minor operation changes, “*operation*” was added. Another change in the cover letter is a change in the fiscal impact of the amount required for recommendation #7 according to Chief Spruill. Instead of \$161,000, it’s actually \$80,000. In the short-term recommendations, staff changed recommendation #1 to reflect that a separate advisory group or work group as discussed by the group would not be appointed. The Task Force would continue meeting, and staff would provide the group with progress updates.

Mr. Lambert indicated comments to the drafts were received from Mr. Hertel and Ellen Stanton, which were distributed to the group.

Changes made to the Recommendations and the Report

- Mr. Hertel’s reference to the OTCA comment in the general meeting and the reference of encouragement of more pedestrian tours.
- Ms. Stanton’s reference to both the short-term recommendations and the report that there were two possible regulatory options.
- Lorraine Lloyd agreed to answer items 2 and 3 raised by Ms. Stanton. Ms. Lloyd said the ACVA tracked 135 overnight and 48 day passes. #3 was a question regarding the location of the hotels. Ms. Lloyd indicated there were no records, as industry does not keep their books based on transportation types.

Mr. Smedberg asked if everyone was comfortable adding that data. There were no objections. Ms. Brown added that there are currently a number of resources available for walking tours and developing those resources for such tours is not an issue.

Mr. Smedberg asked if there were additional comments to the cover letter as the suggestions impact the actual report from the Task Force to the Council.

Ms. Brown inquired of the last item in the report where it indicated Rich Baier and David Baker as being the staff that contributed. The Mayor recommended adding thanks to the Task Force and adding their names. This has been included within the Recommendations report.

All charts have been amended to reflect the change to “group” reservations.

Mr. Smedberg added that the Task Force memo should include the Mayor’s recommendation of adding thanks to the Task Force and listing their names.

Ms. Hall asked whether recommendation #2 might be adjusted to reflect counts of motorcoaches during off-peak (i.e. at times other than March through September). After some discussion, it was agreed that the essence of the recommendation was for staff to begin the counts as soon as possible and that the wording could be made more general to reflect counts during 2009.

Mr. Aronson suggested that it may be the group's desire to add "peak" to recommendation #2. Mr. Aronson also indicated that due to a short review period, there was not time for his group to discuss the final version of the report.

Mayor Euille questioned the \$80,000 cost for police participation. Mr. Lambert repeated the Police Department response which had been included in the report directly as provided.

Ms. Brown recommended changing the language from motorcoach management to transportation management when discussing the Police Department's participation.

Mayor Euille suggested the last paragraph of the Fiscal Impact section of the memo should be reworded to reflect that the cost for transportation management is \$160,000 annually, of which \$80,000 is currently borne by the Police Department in their regular overtime budget but that up to an additional \$80,000 may be needed to support their efforts.

In response to a question about making King Street one-way westbound permanently, Mr. Lambert informed the Task Force that these recommendations would need to be referred to the Traffic & Parking Board for hearing.

Mr. Smedberg then recapped the changes that will be made to the docket item:

1. Mayor Euille's recommendation to change the language regarding counts to "2009."
2. Mr. Aronson's recommendation to "registration and permitting."
3. Ms. Brown's recommendation to strike "motorcoach" management and insert "transportation" management.
4. Mayor Euille's recommendation to reword the last paragraph of Fiscal Impacts to reflect the need for up to \$160,000 annually.
5. Mr. Brown's recommendation to change the names of the staff that contributed or to include the Task Force members by name somewhere in the documents.

Mr. Smedberg asked for a motion to accept the 2-page report. Ms. Hall made the motion, which was seconded by Chief Baker. Mr. Aronson abstained from voting but the Task Force otherwise approved.

Mr. Ely indicated he had drafted a statement about motorcoaches that reflects the sentiment of Old Town residents and asked that it be placed in the records. A discussion ensued during which Ms. Stanton suggested the statement format should be changed from paragraphs to bullets. Mr. Smedberg recommended Bert submit his statement in a letter format using bullets to highlight the main points. He stated the letter would not be a part of the report but it will be a part of the record and that maybe the upcoming public hearing is the route the civic associations could take to voice their opinions.

Ms. Brown suggested the next phase of the meetings should include an analysis of the tour bus turning radii compared to other vehicles. Mr. Lambert said the Task Force had been provided with information regarding all intersection curb radii on streets in Old Town and that it would be possible to provide turning radii for motorcoaches compared to DASH buses at a future meeting.

4. Public & Task Force Q&A

Andrea Stowers acknowledged that she appreciated the Task Force work. She pointed out that Valerie Ianieri, representative of Founders Park Community Association, had been unable to attend

many of the meetings because of personal hardship. Ms. Stowers indicated that Founders Park had not been able to appoint a representative and she believed that the Task Force did not have adequate representation from the area near Founders Park.

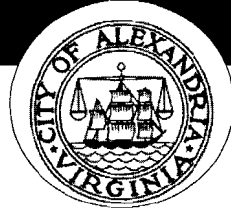
Ms. Stowers introduced the President of Tobacco Quay, William Bartow, and informed the Task Force that she and Mr. Bartow had permission to speak for Founder's Park and residents on Pendleton Street. Ms. Stowers said that Old Town is not China Town or National Harbor where efforts at redevelopment were undertaken to obtain value for areas that had no value. Ms. Stowers said the Task Force, in the name of business for Old Town, was destroying value in the name of private commercial interest.

Mayor Euille said the Task Force did not make the determination that the Founder's Park representative could not be removed from the Task Force. It was never discussed at the meetings and no formal request was ever received by the Task Force.

Mr. Smedberg said that the report does not indicate designated routes and instead reflects managed dispersal.

Task Force members thanked staff their work on the project and Mr. Reminder the group of all that had been accomplished.

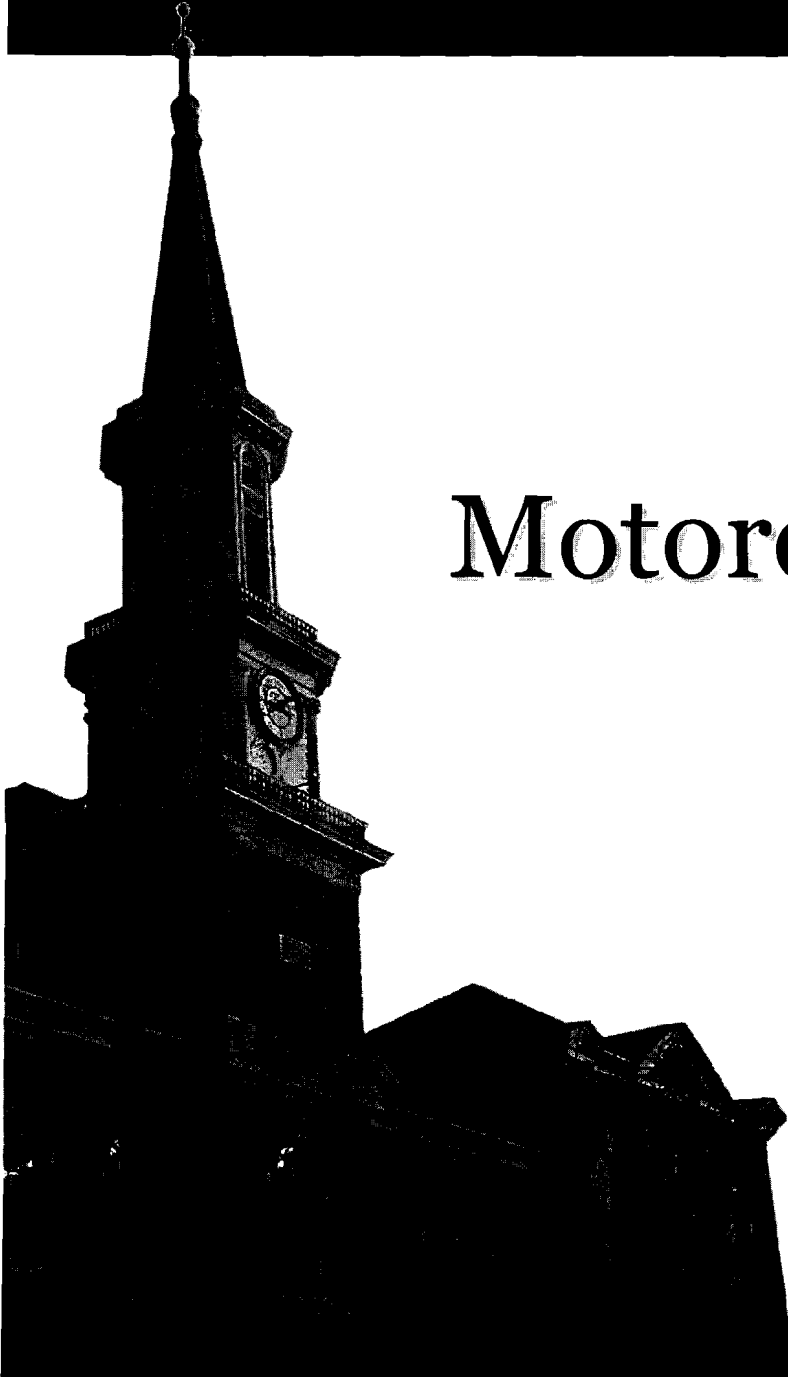
The meeting concluded at 8:30 pm.




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Motorcoach Task Force

February 24, 2009
City Council Meeting
Docket Item #20

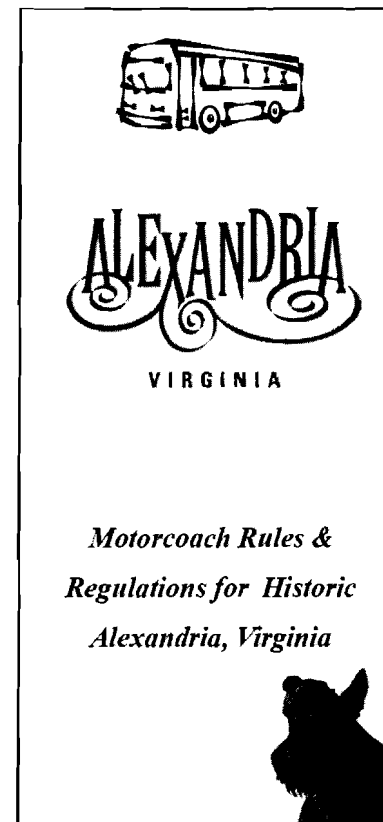


Agenda

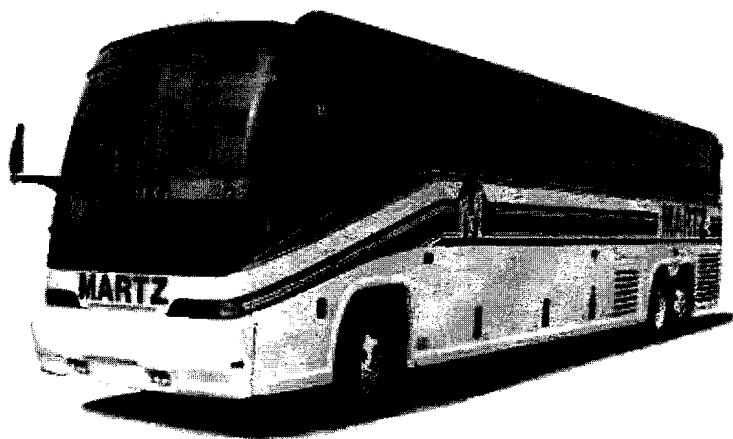
- Background
 - About the Task Force
 - Primary Issues and Citizen Input
 - Recommendations & Framework
 - Short-term/actionable items
 - Long-term management
 - Next Steps & Process
 - Q&A
- 

Background

- Primary season March-June with range of estimates for # of coaches visiting
- 6 loading/unloading locations, 2 short-term parking, 1 long-term (w/fee)
- No routes, little guidance
- Previous efforts to address motorcoaches



About the Task Force



- Appointed by City Manager in May 2008
- 15 members
 - 5 residents
 - 5 business/industry
 - 5 from City Council and Staff (Mayor Euille, Councilman Smedberg, Historic Alexandria Resources Commission, T&ES and Police)


Task Force Members

- **Richard J. Baier, Chair**, Dept. of Transportation & Environmental Services
- **Rob Aronson**, Resident, Alexandria Old & Historic District Residents Group
- **David Baker**, Chief of Police, Alexandria Police Department
- **Stephanie Brown**, Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association
- **Bert Ely**, Resident, Old Town Civic Association
- **William D. Euille, Mayor**, City of Alexandria
- **Nick Gregory**, Kimpton Hotels/Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
- **Charlotte Hall**, Potomac Riverboat Company
- **Hubert Herre**, Crown Plaza Old Town/Alexandria Hotel Association
- **Poul Hertel**, Resident, Old Town Civic Association
- **Valerie Ianieri**, Resident, Founders Park Community Association*
- **Greg Ogden**, Resident, North Old Town Independent Citizens
- **Paul C. Smedberg, Councilman**, City of Alexandria
- **Ellen Stanton**, Historic Alexandria Resources Commission
- **Tara G. Zimnick-Calico**, Old Town Business & Professional Association

***Andrea Stowers** will represent Founders Park Community Association at future meetings.

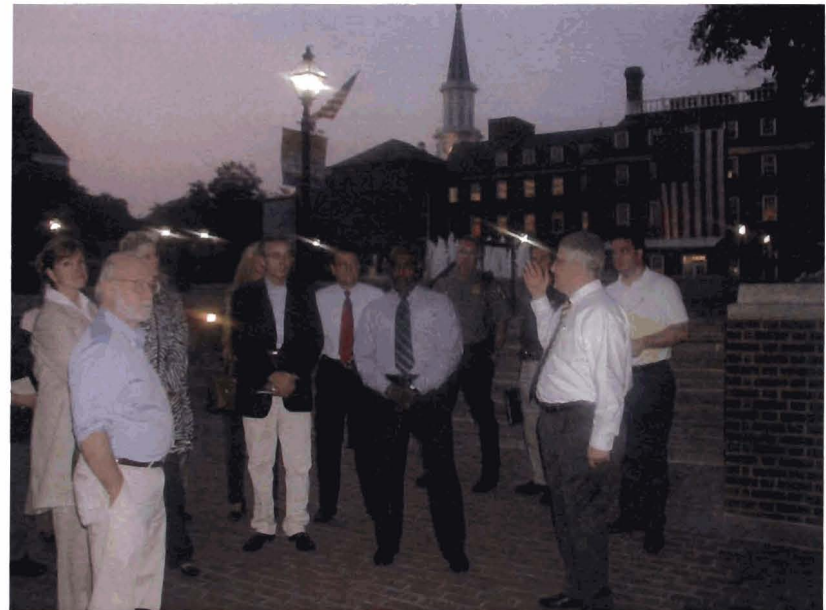
About the Task Force: Charter & Mission

Working collaboratively with multiple stakeholders, the Task Force will develop a proactive approach to motorcoach management that recognizes the economic value of the industry and balances its operational needs with measures to limit intrusive effects on Alexandria's neighborhoods, historic resources, the environment, quality of life, traffic and parking. The Task Force will review best practices and build consent on measures that balance the multiple interests of the City with regards to the public health, safety and welfare of the community. Ultimately, the Task Force will recommend a motorcoach management plan to City Council.








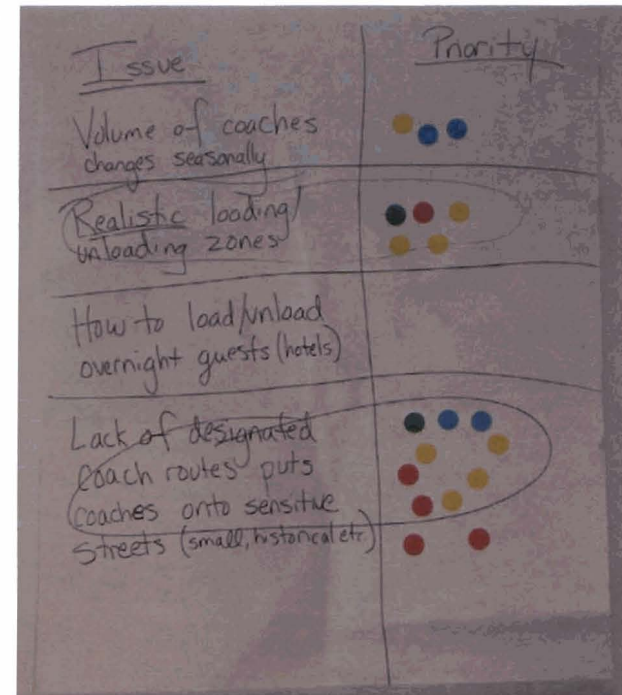
About the Task Force

- Compare motorcoach operations in Alexandria with other cities to review opportunities and constraints
- Incorporate input from residents, industry and local business to ensure a balanced set of interests are addressed
- Develop primary issues and use a solutions-based approach to make short-term and long-term recommendations for motorcoach management



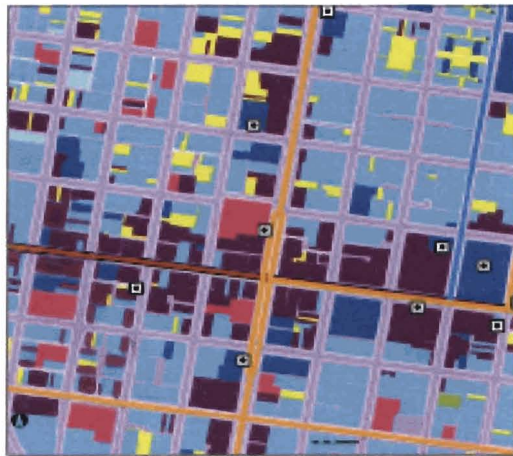
About the Task Force: Key Issues

-  Lack of designated routes puts coaches on sensitive streets/safety (short-term)
-  Lack of short-term & overnight parking (short-term and long-term)
-  Enforcement (short- and long-term)
-  Loading & Unloading (short-term)
-  Communications/Education (short-term)



Extensive data study

Motorcoach Task Force Map



GIS “dynamic map” tool

- P&Z Geographic Information System “dynamic” map allowed real-time analysis of street width, building-to-building width, curb radius, existing transit routes, adjacent land use

Task Force Listened to Citizen Input

- OTCA “Statement of Constraints”& meetings
 - October 8
 - January 14
- Much additional civic association input
 - Old & Hist. Res. Group
 - Tobacco Quay
 - Founders Park
 - North Old Town
 - Independent Citizens



Task Force Listened to Business Input



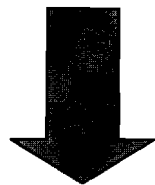
- Chamber of Commerce
- Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association
- Touring Companies
- American Bus Association & United Motorcoach Association

Framework for Motorcoach Management



Guiding Principles for Framework


- Citizens seek more regulatory regime but not eliminate all motorcoach traffic
- Tourism & motorcoach-related business is critical to the long-term health of Alexandria




1. System must include fee-based registration
2. Voluntary at first – but authority within 2-3 years
3. System must limit impacts from certain trip types
4. System must use specific criteria to designate routes for buses & disperse impacts across street grid



Framework to include short-term and long-term recommendations

- Immediately:
 - Counts of motorcoaches
 - More enforcement
 - Improved education/communications
 - Targeted loading & parking improvements
 - Encouragement of walking tours
 - Incremental changes toward better motorcoach management
- 

Long-Term

- Registration/Permitting & Fees
 - Regulatory Authority to Manage Motorcoaches
 - Caps (limits on volume of some types of trips – primarily touring)
 - Discouraging pass-through coaches
 - Parking
 - Central Transfer Point/Visitor Center
 - “Right-sizing” buses for trip type
- 

Proposed 2010 Framework

- Voluntary Registration/Permitting System
 - Access to system possible via Internet for hotels, restaurants, destinations
 - Exploring “mobile apps” for real-time access by mobile phone
 - Centrally managed by City
 - Continual vetting by current Task Force

Proposed 2010 Framework

- Why voluntary?
 - State/Federal Codes limit our reach
 - Allows a “break-in” period for city & industry
 - Many group tours are already voluntarily registering & we want to work collaboratively to continue
 - City counts will buttress voluntary efforts
- Goal: Gather data & start program in a way that enables City to know specifically what it wants by 2011 when we go to General Assembly

Proposed 2010 Framework: Motorcoach Trip Types (“Buckets”)



1. Group Reservations
2. Non-Reservation
3. Sightseeing Buses
w/Step-On Guides
4. “Pass-Through”
Sightseeing Buses

Proposed 2010 Framework

1. Buses with Group Reservations

Buses would register and be given a drop-off/pick-up location.

2. Buses without Group Reservations and bound for loading/unloading/parking east of Wash. Street.

- a) System of *managed dispersal* for buses
- b) Initially, no limit on # of buses that can register
- c) Future parking fees to favor local companies
- d) Buses would prominently display registration in window

Proposed 2010 Framework

3. Sightseeing Buses

- a) Buses w/Alexandria-based step-on guides may get extremely limited # of touring permits

4. Pass-through Buses

- a) Buses that do not register must stay on Washington Street (or Rte. 1)
- b) Additional loading/unloading may be made available on Washington Street at King Street during peak season only

Unresolved Issues

- Designated routes (Managed Dispersal)
- Smaller vehicles
- Continual refinement of trip types



Routes: Managed Dispersal

- **Criteria:**

- Functional Classification
- Adjacent Land Use
- Street Width
- Turning Radius & Presence of Parking/Blind Spots
- Presence of Landmarks/Attractions
- “Walksheds” & Activity Centers
- Existing Transit Route (Trolley, DASH, MetroBus...)
- Access to Commercial Interests & Existing Parking




Small Size Buses

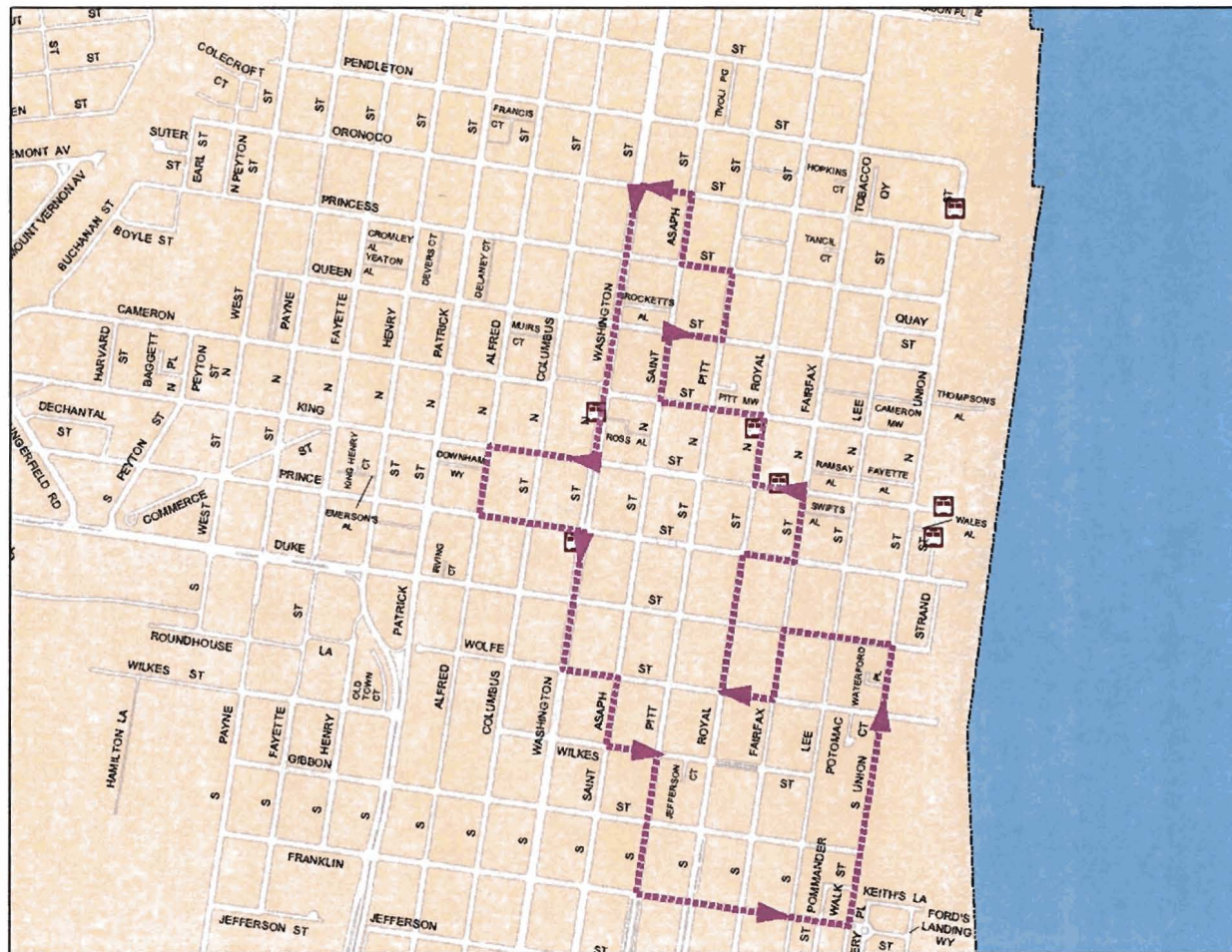


- A future possibility for some trip types
- Jitney/transfer system needs more study
 - Unanswered questions about feasibility & funding
 - Use motorcoach management system to promote “right-sized” vehicles and further study this option for touring trips

Framework >> Bottom Line

- In the short-term >> Enforcement of existing code only
 - Initial system will require cooperation
 - Use methods of dispersal to reduce impact and provide access to businesses
 - Seasonal approaches possible
 - Sightseeing routes remain problematic
- 

Sightseeing Routes?



Short-Term Recommendations

1. Approve the concept of voluntary on-line motorcoach registration,
2. Allocate \$25,000 from Council's FY 2009 Contingent Reserve,
3. Request staff to conduct counts of motorcoach operations in 2009.
4. Request that the City Manager reconvene the Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force as currently constituted to review long-term motorcoach management strategies,
5. Provide quarterly motorcoach updates to the Task Force and to Council, including progress reports on counts, walking tours and registration system,
6. Request that the Police Department more aggressively enforce existing City ordinances,
7. Request that Police continue its transportation management on the unit block of King Street,
8. Permanently designate the unit block of King Street one-way westbound,
9. Designate the south side of Jamieson Avenue between Holland Lane and South West Street as short-term (2-hour) motorcoach parking between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.,
10. Designate new 30-minute motorcoach parking spaces in the following locations:
 - Two spaces at 112-118 North Washington Street
 - Two spaces at 110-112 South Washington Street







Process

- City Council Public Hearing on March 14
- Traffic & Parking Board on March 23
- Implement short-term recommendations in time for peak 2009 season (March-June) and begin work on long-term management w/ working group or advisory committee
 - Quarterly updates
 - Additional meetings planned for summer 2009

Questions & Discussion

www.alexandriava.gov/motorcoach

Thank you.

Rich Baier, P.E.

Director, Dept. of Transportation &
Environmental Services

